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THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

EDGAR QUINET.

94598

FORMING AN EXPLANATION AND A DEFENCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF THE POLICY OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WITH REFERENCE TO THE ROMAN CHURCH IN FRANCE.

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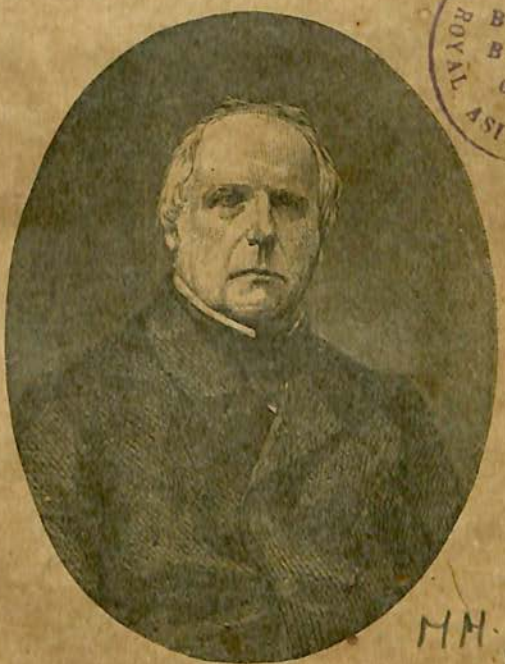

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"The English Revolution has succeeded because it has had the sanction and authority of the Religious Revolution. The English nation has in reality this guarantee, that having passed the Rubicon of the Reformation it is impossible ever again to return to Catholic Jacobitism. Hence its confidence, its security, its calm in the midst of party struggles. This is to it as an acquired point, a certainty, an anchor, a port, such as cannot exist in France. We have been unable to secure any moral point capable of preventing us from falling again into the abyss.

"The French, it has been said, have feelings but no principles. I have shown that this does not arise from their levity, but because it has been absolutely impossible for them to found their political principles on their national beliefs, or to reconcile them with those beliefs; hence, their ideas hang suspended at the mercy of every chance, or of every fanciful opinion. Have they built on the sand?"—*La Revolution, par Edgar Quinet.*

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

WANDERING early one morning in a Maltese vineyard, an English lady observed a tall, austere figure in deep meditation. She had never seen anyone so like her ideal of a Pilgrim Father. 'Why, Monsieur Quinet,' she said, 'you look as sad as if you had lost a friend.' 'I am thinking, Madame,' he replied, 'of my country; it will take two hundred years yet before it is fit for universal suffrage.' To meet Edgar Quinet thus engaged was not extraordinary; he was for more than sixty years continually thinking of his country. He became, in fact, 'part of its conscience,'[1] its true Mentor.

One of the very greatest among the poets and philosophers of this century, all he desired was to devote his talents to the moral elevation of France. For a few years its Government recognized him as a teacher: he was appointed a professor at Lyons, and afterwards in the College of France. At Lyons he

[1] For this phrase, which so truly describes our author's relation to France, we are indebted to a fine and sympathetic essay in the "Fortnightly Review," Feb. 1, 1871: "Edgar Quinet," by Edward Dowden.

began his lectures on the *Genius of the Ancient Religions*, in which he fully developed the cardinal principle of his historical philosophy:—Religion, the Living Force of Humanity, creating social and political institutions, arts, poetry and philosophy—the very soul and motive power of History. Later on at the College of France, as Professor of Southern Literature, he explained by the light of this great thought the cause of the decline of that literature during the last two centuries. Connecting it with the general decadence into which Southern Europe had fallen, he showed that the comparative ruin of this beautiful portion of the globe was the work of the Jesuits—the direct result of the Counter-Reformation inaugurated by Loyola. The enthusiasm on the one hand and the rage on the other proved that Edgar Quinet had said something that went home to the consciences of men. The excitement became so great that the Government altered the title of his chair, and so compelled him to resign. This was in 1846. Later on he became one of the victims of the Coup d'Etat of December, '51, and was for nineteen years an exile from France.

But though struck down, he was by no means disarmed, for during that time he wrote some of his finest works. He resided mainly in Belgium, and amongst his other labours helped to bring to light the works of one of the founders of the Dutch Republic—Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde, the counsellor and intimate friend of William the Taciturn.

No two men were ever more devoted to the cause of

Liberty than Marnix and Quinet, each working and suffering for it, not once but daily, all their lives long; no two men, therefore, have a better right to speak in its name. Quinet was the more philosophic of the two, and had in addition the accumulated light of three centuries to guide him; he had never personally experienced the iron hand of spiritual despotism, having in early life known only priests gentle, tolerant, and truly sympathetic. Yet he felt, if possible even more than Marnix, that the foster-mother of all the tyrannies in Western Europe, their religious sanction and support, was the Roman Catholic Church. Marnix taught that the only way to get rid of the Catholic Church was to treat her to Catholic law. This idea Quinet accepted, and in the work here translated, which originally formed his introduction to the life and works of Marnix, he has applied it to the present position of affairs in Europe with especial application to France.

Let no one imagine that this is a work of unbelief —of destruction; it is, on the contrary, a work springing from real faith and a truly constructive mind. Let no one imagine its author a mere half-hearted believer in Liberty, filled with French notions of the omnipotent power of the State. *The principle of Liberty* and *the importance of the Individual* were the two leading ideas of Quinet's philosophy. Nor can anyone say, after reading this work, that its author is a mere theorist unaware of the practical difficulties he is raising. Quinet knew France better than most Frenchmen, and his political insight again and again

rose to prophetic intuition. Nor can anyone have any difficulty in understanding his arguments, for they are put so plainly that he who runs may read.

Instead of looking so pharisaically on the many falls and ceaseless struggles of modern France, we should do better if we were to ask what they all mean, and why this noble country is doomed Sisyphus-like to be for ever rolling upwards the stone of Liberty, only to have it fall back again with crushing force.

Edgar Quinet has answered that question to the conscience of France, and there is every sign that she is beginning to believe him.

Fifteen years ago he published a work on the French Revolution, in which he showed that its comparative failure was owing to those who made it not understanding the principal condition of its success. In not seeing that any political revolution, to be permanent, must be preceded by a religious one, they had acted just as a man who should think to clear his garden of weeds by cutting them all down with a scythe.

No, Quinet said, the religion of a nation is the root of all its life, and of every one of its institutions, and if you fail to change that, your political efforts, however sweeping, will have to be repeated. And has not this been the fate of France? The Revolution ran its course, and in a very few years the old crop began to appear again, the old institutions, the old methods of ruling. The Mower put in the revolutionary scythe, and the revived mediævalism of the Restoration was cut down in the neatest manner. The scythe was

hardly dry before the young shoots began to spring again, and eighteen years after the process had to be repeated with even more thoroughness. But all to no effect, for a crop richer and ranker than ever began to arise. The scythe went in again, but this time the effort was more difficult, the mower more disheartened. Having succeeded, however, in once more getting his garden into order, the mower begins to reflect that a work that has had to be done four times over, looks as if it would have to be done again and again.

If he could catch his neighbour John Bull in an unsophisticated mood, a rare thing with J. B. nowadays, and were to ask him how it was that free institutions grew so much more easily on English soil than on French, the reply would be: "Just because, Monsieur, my revolution was more radical than yours. You wear your strength out cutting down the old trees, and sweeping off the tops of the weeds: the first thing I did was to 'stub the old waäste.'"

And this very simple truth Quinet has been trying to make his countrymen understand. Nothing, however, but the utter ruin of the hopes of 1848; the alarming upgrowth of Imperialism in Church and State; Cæsarism and Ultramontanism; the frightful catastrophes of Sedan and Paris; the struggle for life during the Commune, and from May to November, 1877; nothing but these experiences could have convinced the French that, after all their stupendous efforts, their great Revolution may finally fail, simply because they have never properly recognized that the

first condition of its success was to 'stub up the old roots.'

If there are any Englishmen who still believe that French Catholicism might be reformed, and its church become a truly national one, let them study the facts of the case, and they will find:—

I. That Catholicism in France tends to become more and more corrupt. Its fall may be measured by two names—from Bossuet to Loyola.

II. That it is the deadly enemy of the French Revolution, and the very citadel of the reactionary party.

III. That it has lost its hold on the affections of the French people.

IV. That for all these reasons, it is an eternal source of perturbation and discord in France.

This century will be remarkable in French history for the growth of a religious feeling, developing, like all natural things, slowly, and by fits and starts. It has discovered itself in every section and every class, among Protestants as well as Catholics. Priests or pastors have had little to do with originating this religious feeling; the springs of the human heart in France have been broken open by the agitating experiences that her people have had to pass through during the last hundred years.

To anyone who has taken pains to study the facts,[1]

[1] As regards Catholicism they may be gathered from such lives as those of Lacordaire, Ozanam, Gratry, and Perreyve; as regards Protestantism many are given in three articles on Modern French Protestantism in "Golden Hours," 1878, by the author of this preface.

there can be no question of the existence of this new tide of religious life in France, beginning early in the century and continuing to grow in volume, making, at special seasons—such as the years immediately preceding 1848, and since the close of the Franco-German war—very distinct starts. Here was a great opportunity for a living church to renew itself. What has the Catholic Church in France done with this rising tide of religious life? Tried to turn it into the most corrupt channels—tried to utilize it for political purposes. What could better prove that, instead of being the heart of France, it has become a cancer in the body politic?

Volumes of facts might be collected in proof. Of this, two or three representative ones must serve here. A stranger from China or Japan, travelling for the first time in France, and beholding colossal statues of the Virgin crowning every high place, especially in the larger cities; and fêtes and altars to the Sacré Cœur in almost every church of importance, might very well come to the conclusion that "Notre Dame" and "Sacré Cœur" were the two gods of France. The Virgin Mary is without doubt to France what the great goddess Diana was to Ephesus. All kinds of wonders are believed to have been done by her, or in her name. Pilgrimages are annually organized to the shrines founded on the spots where she is said to have appeared. To read descriptions of these processions of twelve or fifteen thousand persons, each carrying a great chaplet of beads slung over his shoulder crosswise,

a Bleeding Heart upon his breast, and a lighted wax taper in his hand, singing at the top of their voices, seems like going back to heathendom, as indeed it is. But all this wild excitement is organized. All march in military step, the priests brandishing their tapers like torches, and sometimes facing their men and getting them into right step by beating time.[1]

Since the war, the bishops of France, or at least a large number of them, have given their support to these corruptions, lending themselves to great scenic displays which recall the dark night of paganism. One such took place July 3rd, 1876, when, in a great open esplanade near Lourdes, *nearly forty prelates*, headed by the Apostolic Nuncio, and surrounded by a host of their clergy, met to crown the statue of the Virgin at Lourdes. The solemnities had been preceded by a service in Notre Dame at Paris, at which Cardinal Guibert, the archbishop, presided. Next day at Lourdes an immense mass of people, perhaps 60,000 or 70,000, collected to witness the coronation, which was performed after processions, sermon, &c., by the Apostolic Nuncio. The crown placed on the head of the image was of pure gold, and studded both inside as well as out with diamonds. Its value was stated to be 40,000 francs, or about £1,600.[2]

Of course such religious demonstrations may be easily paralleled or even outdone by stories of American camp-meetings, or of some forms of revivalism in

[1] Lourdes, par Marc-Fournier. Tour de France.
[2] Le Monde Illustré, July 15, 1876.

England, but truly to parallel them we must imagine *the Salvation Army* utilized by the English bishops and the religious aristocracy, to bring about the overthrow of our civil and religious Liberties, and to restore the times of Laud and Strafford.

After such an exhibition of paganism on the part of the bishops of France, who can be surprised if their flocks fall more and more into religious habits almost similar to those of the negroes of Central Africa? A luxurious crop of the basest superstitions has sprung up, spreading everywhere like the creeping things, animal and vegetable, that cover a ruin.[1]

A still deeper corruption of French Catholicism has been the immense impulse given to the worship of the Sacred Heart, at the present time the one most patronized by the French Bishops, and the most fashionable in France. Its fêtes are more pompous than those of Easter Sunday. Its associations are said to number a million members.

This Worship is two hundred years old, but since the Restoration it has been found the one most attractive to an age distinguished above all others for its humanitarianism. Everything has been done to pro-

[1] A selection of these superstitions has been made by M. Paul Parfait from some of the most popular works of the Ultramontane propaganda, works sanctioned by the highest officials in the Church. He calls his work *L'Arsenal de la Dévotion: Notes pour servir à l'Histoire des Superstitions.* Of this book a critic in the *Spectator*, November 25, 1876, says: "It seems to us that if M. Parfait has really read his authorities well, and not misdescribed the total effect of this strange mass of superstition, he has introduced us to the most painful evidence of the religious decadence of Roman Catholicism that can be conceived."

mote it until it seems to overshadow every other religious idea. It is above all represented as the great means for "the salvation of France," a synonym for the restoration of the Bourbons and the domination of the Church.[1]

How thoroughly radical and determined this attempt at once to corrupt and master French Catholicism has been, and how completely it has succeeded, the Abbé Michaud has shown in his work on the falsification of the Catechism. A more complete change still was made in the Parisian breviary, which, after having been used for ages by French Catholics, was put aside for the Roman one;—the object of all this revolutionary work being the thorough unification of the *Church*—understanding by that term the clergy and the faithful—in complete submission to the guidance of the papal *curia*, hiding itself under the shadow of the name of the Pope, or under the more imposing one of Rome. Cardinal Bonnechose let the cat out of the bag when during the palmy days of the Empire he said in the French Senate: "My clergy is a regiment; when I say, 'March,' it marches."

And to attain this object the dominant power has struck at the noblest hearts in the Church, and succeeded in crushing the party that dared to hope that Catholicism might be reconciled with Liberty. No fact proves so convincingly the rapid corruption

[1] *Le Sacré Cœur de Jésus, Salut de la France, par le Père H. Pottier, de la Compagnie de Jésus.* But the literature of *Sacred Heart* is vast, and probably as universal as Catholicism.

and growing tyranny of the Roman Church, and that it really means war against modern institutions and the modern spirit, as its complete triumph over all that was noblest and most truly Christian in the Catholic Church in France.

A generation ago French Catholicism was adorned by a galaxy of great-hearted men, who hoped to find in a liberal interpretation of Church ideas the reconciliation of Liberty with Religion.

Montalembert, Lacordaire, and Ozanam appeared then as the leaders of the Catholic revival, and exercised an immense influence over the youth of France. Eloquent, imbued with the sacred fire of genius, of spotless reputation and purest aim, lovers of God and of man, devoted alike to religion and to liberty, if it had been possible to restore the Roman Church to the affections of the people of France—if it had been possible to put her in accord with all the priceless benefits Frenchmen had obtained without her and in spite of her—these were the men to have done it. For this object they laboured ceaselessly, enduring misunderstanding, reproach; Montalembert in the Chamber of Peers, by speeches that gave the orator a European reputation; Lacordaire in the pulpit of Notre Dame, by conferences that drew 6,000 young men at a time to hear him; Ozanam in the College of France, by lectures so earnest as to move some of his students to a decision they had not thought possible outside a church; their efforts being continued, and their work deepened in the hearts of their disciples by the purity

and piety of such teachers as Père Gratry and the Abbé Charles Perreyve. But the torrents of Ultramontanism have gone over this party of Enlightenment and Liberty, and now hardly a trace of it is left. By their genius and virtue the Liberal Catholics rehabilitated Romanism in France; by their zeal on behalf of religious liberty they brought back the Jesuits to France, and placed the Catholic youth in the hands of their enemies. Their position, in fact, was utterly illogical, and they shared the fate of all who try to make grapes grow on thorns, or figs on thistles. The efforts to induce Catholicism to become the sincere friend of Civil and Religious Liberty proved, to the last degree, illusory. Having served their purpose, nothing could prevent the ruin of the Liberal Catholic party in France, not even the sympathy and friendship of the nominal heads of their Church. Archbishop Sibour, writing to Montalembert in 1863, complained that the Ultramontanes were conducting the Church "to a twofold idolatry—idolatry of the temporal power, and idolatry of the spiritual power." Yet on being asked if anything could be done, he, though then Archbishop of Paris, replied, "No; the tide is too strong." [1]

The conquering party, having thus overcome their opponents and obtained the direction of Catholicism in France, was free to mould it according to its own ideas; and accordingly the Jesuits soon appeared in all

[1] The questioner was a friend of the Archbishop, the late learned Orientalist, Garcin de Tassy, a truly pious Catholic.

parts of the country as the educators of the young. Their colleges became the most popular among the higher classes, because they knew better than any how to give their pupils that polish and refinement so much valued in society. Above all, they sought to make themselves influential in the army. At a recent examination of the Military College of St. Cyr, out of twenty-eight candidates for admission, no less than twenty-two came from a Jesuit college.

Now what has been the object of this persistent effort to pervert the religious Renaissance of the nineteenth century? The same as that so successfully achieved in the seventeenth century. The Jesuits then conceived and carried out the Counter-Reformation, their successors have now conceived and are preparing the way for the Counter-Revolution.

The Jesuit and Ultramontane rulers of the Church have clearly seen that they cannot exist in the same world as the Revolution, meaning, as it does, the triumph of the principles of civil and religious liberty; and have accordingly devised and commenced a counter-revolution, the object of which is the re-establishment, in more than its mediæval integrity, of the Papal autocracy, not only in the Church, but over every State. This great design they denominate "the Re-construction of Society."

In the face of the tremendous effort made to crush the Republic from May to November, 1877, it is of no use saying that this is a mere mare's nest. De Broglie was supposed to be a Liberal Catholic, and

MacMahon an honest soldier, but neither one nor the other made the party of reaction: they were simply its instruments. Of that party Catholicism is the soul, and Catholicism in France has for years past been directed by the Ultramontane and Jesuit party.

It has been, without doubt, this determined attempt to destroy in France the great work of the Revolution of '89, and to re-establish in all its completeness the Jesuit ideal of society, that has aroused such a violent and bitter animosity in the minds of a vast section of those who are still regarded by the State as Catholics. Its complete triumph over all its internal enemies, crushing, as is its habit, without remorse its most distinguished pillars the moment they thwart its policy, produces a sense of its power, and the possibilities of its development, almost terrifying. On the bare principle of self-protection, the French Republic has the right so to deal with Catholicism as to render it impotent.[1]

But a State has higher duties than merely to protect itself and its citizens. It is not only its right, but the first of all its duties, to look after the moral welfare of its people. What a contradiction to suppose that it has the right to take the education of the nation into its hands and yet no right to forbid the existence of schools which it believes to be utterly corrupting, and which, moreover, are the centres of an influence bent

[1] "The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is *self-protection*."—J. S. Mill, "On Liberty," pp. 21, 22.

on its destruction! This was the very question that Quinet and his brothers-in-arms, Michelet and Mickiewitz, fought out in the College of France;[1] and they refused to be driven off the high ground of the moral welfare of the nation. They refused to be misled by any abstract notions about Liberty. They fought for its substance, not its shadow. They utterly repudiated the idea of putting Liberty into the hands of her enemies. Montalembert and his friends spoke a language that sounded more magnanimous, but they found in the end that they had only put the key of the fortress into the hands of the enemy, and were themselves prisoners of war.

There are many persons who would gladly see the end of the Church of Rome, but are horrified at the idea of its legal suppression. To such persons Quinet puts the pertinent question:—How otherwise do you believe Catholicism will come to an end?

By Education.—But where will the educators be found who will outrival the Jesuits?

Mr. Matthew Arnold, who spent seven months as a Government Commissioner inquiring into the working of Continental schools, is quite enthusiastic in his praise of the Jesuit school for the higher classes at Vaugirard, a suburb of Paris, going so far as to say that of all the schools in France, this was the one in which he would soonest have been a schoolboy. He describes the Dominican school at Sorèze as a "French Eton," and

[1] The works of Quinet and Michelet abound in references to this great struggle.

he declares that little as the people care about Ultramontane theories, he found them everywhere believing that the *religieux* and *religieuses* were the natural people to teach the young.[1] The fact is, Religion is not only the basis of education, but its very principle, and no education that ignores the religious sentiment will ever successfully compete in *influence* with one of which that sentiment is the main object, even though plainly inferior in all technical points and radically corrupt.

Others think that the progress of enlightenment will bring Catholicism to an end.[2] With histories before us, such as those of Italy and Spain, this is but a very slender reed to rest upon. What Quinet feared for France was a fate such as befell the Italian States,—gradual degeneracy and moral death under the influence of Jesuitized Catholicism.

Others look to the separation of Church and State. Well, Edgar Quinet wished for that, but not alone; for he knew, as all Frenchmen know, that so far from lessening the dangers which the State has to fear from Catholicism, the liberation of the Church from State control without other precautions would tend to their increase. A vast ecclesiastical organization, directed by its deadly enemies and worked by the most potent of all forces, would be unendurable in any State, most

[1] *Schools and Universities on the Continent*, by Matthew Arnold, M.A., p. 78.

[2] Lord Macaulay in a famous passage declares that he sees great reason to doubt that the progress of enlightenment will prove unfavourable to Catholicism.—*Essay on Ranke.*

of all in one attempting to found new institutions. No, France is not likely to attempt the experiment of a free Church in a free State.

Are there any who still believe in the possibility of the Catholic Church being converted to Liberal principles? If the history of the Liberal Catholic party in France is not sufficient to dissipate this illusion, such persons may profitably read an article by M. de Laveleye in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, called the *Religious Crisis in the Nineteenth Century*,[1] the burden of which is:—"Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?"

If the Liberal authorities in England who blame the way in which the French Republic is meeting its crucial difficulty know any other means let them name it. But if they cannot, they may fairly be asked whether Liberal principles would compel them to allow Catholicism to act in England as it has done in France? Would they bind them to allow their power to maintain Liberty to be undermined, and the social fabric that they had raised at the cost of untold suffering and sacrifice to be endangered? It would be well if English Liberals would work out the problem of Religious Liberty once again, and see if it really forces men to grant Religious Liberty to the great *Foe* of Religious Liberty. I say *Foe* and not *foes*, for it is not against individual Catholics, but against Catholicism as a great political system represented by the Roman Catholic

[1] *La Crise Religieuse au XIXme Siècle*, par Emile de Laveleye, tom. 43, pp. 836, 837.

Church, that Edgar Quinet, Emile de Laveleye, and other enlightened friends of Civil and Religious Liberty make war. It is not for the world only, but for Catholics themselves that they fight.

Civil Liberty has its limits: why not Religious Liberty?

Is the Roman Catholic Church content to take its place in a free State? Does it not by all its outcries against modern institutions show that it still claims and never will be content with anything less than absolute dominion over the consciences of men. Can it do otherwise? Here, then, is an Institution that clearly places itself outside the right of Religious Liberty! And it is against this Institution the modern State has to fight or to fall!

We may, however, be entirely convinced that it would be perfectly just to put a legal end to the Roman Catholic Church in France, and yet doubt whether it is politic to attempt so great a revolution, since nothing would be more unwise than to stir up a religious war which might end in a fresh victory for Romanism.

This Quinet fully recognized, and was careful to say that the actual carrying out of his advice depended upon the time, the circumstances, the temper of the people. But if he were living, would he not say that the time was now come?

1st. In the condition of the popular mind, so bitterly inimical to the Roman Church and its clergy.[1]

[1] "It is a horribly ungentlemanly thing to say here, though I *do* say it without the least reserve—but my sympathy is all with the radicals."

No one can walk the streets of any of the great cities of France, or take up the newspapers read by the people, and not be aware of this popular animosity. One of the most recent occurred at Lyons, a hotbed of Ultramontanism, and as it moreover demonstrates how public opinion in France regards the Decrees, we give it:—

"The funeral of Claudius Cros, who was stabbed by De Lubac as he was witnessing the expulsion of the religious orders at Lyons, was in the highest degree dramatic. On the way to the grave the coffin was taken into the church, and was laden with crowns. An immense crowd was stationed before the mortuary house. The parish priest, the vicar, and the altar boys headed the cortège. Immediately after them, and before the coffin, was borne aloft by four schoolfellows of the defunct a double wreath, with the words, 'To Claudius Cros, aged 20, assassinated by the sbirri of Clericalism.' Behind the Cros family walked the Municipal Council, the senators of the Rhône, and the Republican councillors-general, the mayors of several arrondissements, the fire brigade, and the students of the Lyonnese State Faculties. Republican journalism was represented by the editors bearing wreaths. Ten thousand persons followed the coffin through the streets, lined by a silent sympathizing multitude. Twelve students, friends of the defunct, were pall-bearers. As the coffin advanced persons rushed from the footway to lay on it crowns, which were soon heaped up so high that the relations had to take some off and carry them. Of the immense crowd not a soul entered the church, where the undertakers received the coffin. The youth's family even remained without. While the funeral rites were being celebrated over the corpse, tremendous cries echoed in the church of 'Vivent les Décrets;' 'Vive la République;' 'Vive la Loi;' 'A bas les Jésuites.' The coffin reappeared, and every head was uncovered again, and the silence was resumed, broken, however, on many points of

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I don't know any subject on which this indomitable people have so good a right to a strong feeling as Catholicity—if not as a religion, clearly as a means of social degradation. They know what it is. They live close to it. They have Italy beyond the mountains. They can compare the effect of the two systems at any time in their own valleys; and their dread of it, and their horror of the introduction of Catholic priests and emissaries into their towns, seems to me the most rational feeling in the world."—CHARLES DICKENS, Letter from Lausanne, October, 1846, *Life*, vol. ii., p. 272.

the route to the railway terminus, whence the corpse was to be transported to the family burying-place. A cordon of police formed round the terminus court to prevent those who did not attend as relatives, or in an official capacity, entering. At the gate there was a halt. One of Cros's school friends, a M. Mouny, who bore a crown, advanced to bid a supreme adieu. He put his arms round the coffin, wept, then lifting high his hands, said in a vibrating voice, 'Beloved friend, farewell. Thou hast fallen a victim to those who have violated and trodden under foot our country's laws. Thy last words were, "Vive la République!" We who knew and loved you, re-echo them over thy remains.' Mouny here cried 'Vive la République!' which was taken up by the masses around. He then added, 'Keep fresh the memory of the crime which has been perpetrated. Swear in the name of the French youth eternal hatred against those who assassinated our friend.'"[1]

But what is far more surprising is to find that this hostility to the Church extends to the country, and discovers itself in the most remote and secluded hamlets.

"I asked," says the Abbé Bougaud, "a young priest one day how he got on in his little parish."

"During the week," said he, "tolerably, but Sunday is terrible. I come to mass, I find there perhaps thirty women and two or three men—but what to say to them? I am more ready to weep than to talk. At vespers no one."[2]

This statement from a thoroughly Catholic source is corroborated by the following story taken from a thoroughly Protestant one.

A Protestant pastor lately went into a country place to visit an isolated Protestant. A peasant offered to show him the way, and finding out from his cravat what his profession was, he began to talk to him about the decay of religion.

"Of *what* religion do you speak?" asked the pastor.

"Oh," he replied, "it doesn't matter which. There is no longer *any* religion, we believe *nothing* here. No one here goes any more to church."

"I thought," said the pastor, "on the contrary, that you were very devout."

"Devout!" he replied, "in what way?"

"Why, I see that people here speak only as *M. le curé* speaks, swear only as *M. le curé* swears, vote only as *M. le curé* votes."

"That is because we are afraid to fall out with them. They are everything here, mayors, schoolmasters, judges—everything."

Just at this moment the *curé* passed, and the peasant was somewhat

[1] *Daily News.* [2] *Le Grand Péril de l'Eglise de France*, 1878.

taken aback. However, he quickly recovered himself, and taking off his hat, made a profound bow.

"I assure you," continued my companion, "it is just what I said, we are afraid of them."

"Afraid! What do you think they will do to you? Come, confess you are afraid that they will send you to hell."

"Oh no, not at all, not at all;" he cried warmly, "it isn't that, but they are wicked, wicked, and when they have taken a dislike to any one, there is no shabby trick but what they will play him."

"Here is," concludes the narrator, "a village, a prosperous village, with its women and its children, where no one believes anything, where they suffer this want of faith with resignation, without a hope and without a smile. The minister of religion, the man who speaks to them in the name of God, is saluted with respect, and turned into ridicule the moment he is gone. And sadder still, he knows as well as they do that all the homage he gets from his flock is nothing better than a comedy."[1]

Facts upon facts could be heaped up to prove the existence of an hostility to the Church which may fairly be called *National*. Every one knew in voting for the Republic at the last elections that he was voting against the will of the Church expressed in every possible way, yet millions of Catholics did so, and did it exultingly. Nor can it be said that it was a mere reaction against the violence of the *régime* of May 16th, since on subsequent occasions the people not only confirmed, but increased their vote.[2] As to the recent Decrees, they are manifestly the work of the People; all doubt of this must now be removed by the way they have been received throughout France. The Bonapartists are said to be in despair, for they see that the French care for the Republic above all

[1] *L'Eglise Libre*, Aug. 16, 1878.

[2] M. Turquet, Deputy for the department of Aisne, entered in the spring of 1877, with his family, into the Protestant Church; at the next election his majority, in spite of his new title of "renegade," increased by more than 1,200 votes.

things. But that which most of all proves the decline of the Church in the affections of its members is, the increasing difficulty it finds in recruiting its priesthood. People of all kinds will support the Church from interested or political motives, but very few are prepared to suffer for it. Religious persons will go into monasteries or convents, where they are shut off from the world and have the support of numbers, but they are not so willing to take up the painfully *isolated* position of a parish priest.

A remarkable pamphlet appeared in 1878, called "The Great Peril of the Church of France,"[1] written by the Abbé Bougaud, Vicar-General of the diocese of Orleans, and for which he received the thanks of Cardinal Nina, the Pope's Secretary of State. The object of this pamphlet was to demonstrate that a rapid decline is taking place in the numbers of the priesthood in most of the dioceses in France. The author gives a map, in which he shows that out of the 87 dioceses into which France is divided, only 27 have a sufficient number of priests, that 21 want from 15 to 30, and 39 from 30 to more than 100.

The sources of the Vicar-General's information were the bishops themselves. Their pastoral letters he described as "only one groan." Out of the chorus of complaints rises here and there an especially sharp cry of distress, as when the Bishop of Troyes, in a circular letter issued in 1876, writes: "The diocese of

[1] Published by Poussielgue Frères, Paris, 1878.

Troyes has, at the present time, 91 parishes without *curés;* and out of 343 who are engaged in the holy ministry, 141 are more than sixty years old, while 48 are over seventy."

As every year the diocese loses, on an average, twelve priests by death, while it has only about eight new ones coming from the Grand Seminary to supply their places, four more parishes will annually be added to those already vacant; so that the Bishop calculates that in twenty years in his diocese alone there will be 171 parishes without *curés.*

Troyes, however, is far from being an isolated case; the same cry comes up from Dijon, from Langres, from Bayeux, from Auch, from Beauvais, from Evreux, from Versailles, from Bourges, and from Digne. In 1877 there were in all 2,568 parishes wanting priests.

What makes this decline more portentous is that it is not simply the result of a momentary reaction or depression. It has been steadily increasing for several years past.

But the most ominous symptom of all is, that the sources of recruitment are themselves drying up.

These sources are the seminaries, of which there are two kinds, the preliminary or *petit séminaire,* the higher, called the *grand séminaire.*

The Archbishop of Sens speaks of the *grand séminaire* in his diocese falling from 120 or 130 pupils to only 50.

The Bishop of Nîmes said in 1876, "When I cast a look at the *grand séminaire* my eyes are filled with

tears, for I count there only thirty-four pupils in a house which formerly had more than eighty. The School of Philosophy at Beaucaire has only two..... By what mystery are we come to this?"

The Vicar-General of the diocese of Rheims writes under date, February 19th, 1878:—"Since the war of 1870 more especially, we have seen the number of vocations diminish in a deplorable manner. The *grand séminaire* had an average of 100 pupils; this year it counts only 55. Our *petit séminaire* of Rheims had ordinarily nearly 230 pupils; this year we have fallen to 150. The future frightens us."

The *petits séminaires* seem to afford even still more anxiety. "There is the same falling off in numbers," the Bishop of Verdun wrote in 1874. "In place of 150 pupils—a figure indispensable to the wants of our diocese—the *petit séminaire* numbers now no more than 90."

Every change and every effort to make these *petits séminaires* more successful seems only to have rendered their decline as sacerdotal nurseries more conspicuous. Even when hermetically sealed to mundane influences, the Abbé Bougaud says that they still exhibit the same decline. He knows of one where the fourth form counts forty-four pupils, and only yields four priests. The Bishop of Périgueux says he knows *petits séminaires* where, out of 300 or 400 young people, a few rare exceptions give themselves to the Church. Rather than do this, the greater number of the pupils, at the end of their classical studies, re-enter the world to occupy social positions, often of the meanest order.

If the seminaries are intended to be the rivers which fertilize the Church, the presbyteral schools are meant to serve as innumerable rivulets, which, emptying themselves perennially into the larger streams, keep them ever flowing. These streams are threatened then with rapid extinction if, in addition to the many causes which divert the main body of water, we have to add that the tributary rivulets themselves seem drying up. But all things tend towards this result, chief of all, probably, the unpopularity into which the priesthood itself has fallen, not only among the urban, but also among the rural populations. Dying from dry-rot within, bitterly hated by the major part of the nation, a source of dis-union and a standing menace to New France, what can be wiser than that the French Republic should, by every means compatible with justice and humanity, seek to bring to an end the Roman Church in France?

The "Ferry Laws" have been the first step in this direction, and, with the exception of the famous Clause 7, were admitted to be most reasonable. This clause was directly aimed at the Jesuits, though it included all unauthorized orders. Liberty in England is so strong, that her friends think she may walk about anywhere unarmed. They forgot that in countries where the struggle is still pending, it is simple madness for Liberty to put herself into the hands of the enemy. There is nothing we are so impressed with as the importance of education, and above all of religious education; and yet we fail to see

what is involved in permitting the mind of Catholic France to be moulded by the Jesuits. Strong as Liberty is in England, it has its limits even with us. If the liberty to teach be a right that ought to be inviolable, why interfere with its efforts from the platform? Surely children want more protection than men. European history proves that a company of Jesuits quietly sapping the foundations of a State, are far more dangerous than any number of seditious orators.

But it may be finally urged, such a course as Quinet proposes involves all kinds of dreadful results, and the mind is haunted by a vision of racks, thumbscrows, and fagots.

Setting aside the absurdity of supposing that a simple-hearted philosopher, who, in religion, might have been called a French Channing, should have entertained the spirit of a Torquemada or a Marat, we may be quite sure that such results are simply impossible in the nineteenth century. Rome and the Jesuits, even if they had it all their own way, neither could nor would repeat such enormities, for the Spirit of the Age, a greater pope than any found at the Vatican, dominates Jesuit and Republican alike. Edgar Quinet, it is true, advocates the legal suppression of the Catholic Church; but laws of this kind, as we all very well know, would, in the present day, be carried out with gloved hands. There may be enthusiastic souls who would aspire to martyrdom, but the French Government, even if administered by the Extreme Left, is not likely to be so foolish as to gratify them.

Besides, the work of suppression would be the exact opposite of its prototypes. Instead of being an effort on the part of the State to compel its subjects to obey the dominant religion, it would be an effort to deliver them from its corrupt and disintegrating influence. Instead, therefore, of harassing individuals, the State would direct all its efforts against the Institution itself. Merely to apply to it the second term of the formula of the Revolution—Equality—would in itself be a staggering blow, for among other results that would follow,—

I. The clergy would no longer have any legal right to their lofty titles or places of precedence.

II. The young seminarists would be liable to military service.

III. Marriage of priests would be legalized.

IV. Monastic property would not be allowed to evade the succession duties.

It would not, in fact, disturb the modern conscience if monastic institutions, founded on vows of poverty and charity, with permission to the corporation to accumulate any amount of property, were altogether prohibited. It is stated that according to recent official documents the unauthorized orders possessed goods amounting to the value of 160 millions of francs, and of this, forty-two millions belong to the Jesuits, whilst those of the authorized congregations amounted to 420 millions. The female orders held nearly 50,000 acres, producing about fifteen millions of francs yearly, and said to be worth 380 millions. As

these corporations never lie, and ought never to live beyond their incomes or make bad debts, at the rate their property has increased during the last thirty years, they will eventually become the richest class in France. Could any State afford to let all this wealth drift into the hands of its enemies, to say nothing of the harm to the country on other grounds?

The unauthorized orders have been dissolved, but a far greater blow awaits the Church—the laicalizing of the public schools. By the law of 1850 public instruction was to be moral and religious. Only one means of carrying this out appeared possible—Denominational Education. The Catholic religion being nominally the religion of almost the entire population, public education has since been under its influence; the Protestants, in fact, obtain so little advantage by the system that out of 1369 communes only 348 have schools for boys. In the last session the Superior Council have issued a sort of model conscience clause, which has been generally accepted by the departmental councils; but it still remains the fact that primary education in France is almost entirely under the influence of the Church. The law proposed in the Chamber of Deputies on the 4th of December, 1880, will entirely de-clericalize it.

Of course every such attempt to interfere with the free development of the Roman Catholic Church will be called persecution, but the mind must be in a very foggy state that does not see that it will be persecution in a quite opposite sense from that practised on the

Huguenots—it will be no attempt to compel individual consciences to profess a particular religion, but a determined effort to weaken, and if possible destroy, a powerful institution, that is a source of danger to every modern State and the chief foe of the Revolution.

In one of his works Quinet has described with much power the effect of the fall of a national institution; the abyss that opens up at every hearth, the dismay, the sadness that comes over men's hearts. This is how Englishmen would feel if the Church of England by some political convulsion were to suffer as complete a legal suppression as that of the East India Company. But there is every reason to believe such would not be the case in France. The atrocious persecutions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are more and more recognized by the vast majority of enlightened Frenchmen to have been the cause of endless evil to the country. No possible special pleading can save Catholicism from the reproach of being the inspirer of those persecutions. On the other hand, the masses view the Roman Catholic Church as the enemy of the Revolution to which they owe so much, and the peasant proprietor is quite as much afraid as the artisan of her restoration to power.

Nevertheless her fall would leave a gap, a yearning in many hearts which nothing but a better religion could supply. Is Quinet, it may be asked, prepared to replace that which he proposes to take away?

Quinet is no visionary, he has no new religion to offer. But he is too profound a believer in the im-

portance of Religion to the Individual, the Family, the Nation, to lead men to mere secularism. The thought of France becoming an European China was little less painful to him than to see her the prey of a religion which had so much in common with Brahminism and Buddhism. But all things, according to his philosophy, proceeded from the Individual, and no one could have held in more respect the sanctity of the Individual Conscience or the Freedom of the Human Will. He would have been the last man therefore to impose any religion by authority. At the same time he knew what the mass of men were, how much, even in the highest things, they were the creatures of habit and companionship. While then he implored all who did not believe in the Roman Catholic Church to come out, as they valued their moral welfare and that of their families, he advised them in so doing to become members of one of the many free religious societies they saw around them—to unite themselves as families with some religious sect. In order to bring this out more completely, we have interpolated a passage from his "Letter on the Religious and Moral Situation" of Europe, into the last chapter of this pamphlet. Without it the full meaning of his advice would not be understood, as he takes it for granted that his readers are well acquainted with that "Letter."

The more Quinet's works are studied, the more it will be seen that he has foreshadowed almost every important change that has taken place in France during the last generation. This very plan of coming

out of the Roman Church in bodies, and entering by families into the Protestant Churches, which he proposed more than twenty years ago, has since been put into action, and during the last two or three years has received a remarkable development.

Isolated cases have occurred as far back as 1869 in which the major part of the inhabitants of a commune have gone over to Protestantism and built a temple, but in the present state of the public mind this might become very general. In an interesting pamphlet,[1] by M. Eugène Reveillaud, entitled, "La Question religieuse et la Solution Protestante," the author not only affirms his belief that the object to work for is the continuation of the great reforming work of the sixteenth century, but he feels sure that the country is ripe for it, and the way practicable.

For the last year or two M. Reveillaud has devoted himself to the advocacy of his idea by the press and the platform, and the interest shown everywhere to listen to his lectures indicates a preparedness on the part of the French people for some great religious change. His conferences in the towns are generally held in theatres; in country places, in barns; and in both cases they are filled to overflowing with audiences eager to listen. From his report for 1879, relating his tours in the department of Aisne and in the Auvergne—two parts of France as utterly different one from the other as Lincolnshire and Westmore-

[1] Published by Grassart, Paris, 1878.

land—it would appear that the welcome was the most complete in the more Catholic of the two. At a large village in La Creuse, 600 men, women, and young people met him in a great schoolroom, clearing out all the forms to make room. Eighty fathers of families signed an address to the prefect, requesting him to authorize the establishment of regular Protestant worship, the municipal council meanwhile deliberating whether they should not take one of the two churches of the commune for the purpose. At the military port of Rochefort, 1,200 persons crammed into the *Bourse* to hear him. At Saintes, again, there were more than a thousand people in the theatre.[1]

This movement is not merely an individual one; we only quote M. Reveillaud's efforts as an illustration. Others are engaged in the same work, and many hundreds more in all parts of France are preaching a free unclerical gospel. Their reports are unanimous as to the welcome with which they are everywhere received.

That the French as a people are favourably inclined towards Protestantism at the present moment, and that various secular journals—notably the popular Paris newspaper, called the "XIX^{me} Siècle"—advocates a religious movement in this direction, is well known; but it remains to be seen whether the Protestant Churches in France can rise to the occasion;

[1] Mouvement actuel vers le Protestantisme.—Rapport de 1879. See also "Le Signal," edited by M. Reveillaud; *passim*.

whether they are not themselves too ecclesiastical, too sectarian, too laden with the traditional teaching, to meet the religious want of the nineteenth century.

It might naturally be supposed that a Reformed Catholicism would be the bourn to which religious France tended. But the effort that Père Hyacinthe has so nobly made meets with hardly any national support. At the Revolution, France broke definitely with the principle of delegated divine authority. She had not the courage to do so at once in the religious sphere, but the principle of Liberty then got such possession of her mind and heart, that it must finally cast its opponent out from this and from every other possible retreat. New France must deny its foundation principles before it can accept any religion which is not, in its essence and in its forms, sincerely free. The Christianity that is to win France must be the free, democratic, spontaneous, unorganised Christianity of the New Testament. Neither modified Calvinism nor modified Catholicism can become the religion of a people whose national formula is—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

As a fragmentary work such as this may be misunderstood, it may be well to conclude this preface with one or two affirmations which those who have studied the life and writings of Edgar Quinet will know to be true.

We have already stated that a more sincere believer in the sanctity of the Individual Conscience could not

have existed, and being so, he necessarily asserted in the strongest manner its legitimate outcome,—Liberty of Worship. "I know," he says, "as everybody does, that liberty of worship is the principle that ought to prevail, that it is the basis of the modern conscience."[1]

But while there never was a politician who founded his teaching more on principle, there never was a philosopher more practical. With Quinet, a bird in the hand was always worth two in the bush. The realization of Liberty of Worship in the belief and practice of his countrymen was of more value in his eyes than any number of magniloquent decrees in its favour.

Nearly one hundred years ago France began to affirm the right of Liberty of Worship; how is it that at this moment her citizens are not free to hold a meeting for religious worship without permission from the civil authority? Because, Quinet replies, the temperament of a people or of a State remains unchanged until it changes its Religion. A State may write Liberty of Worship in its constitution, but as long as it remains allied to a Religion opposed to such a principle, Liberty of Worship will remain a promise, ever in danger of being broken and denied.

Finally, Quinet will be misunderstood and unfairly treated if his words are so twisted as to represent him as opposed to Liberty of Catholic Worship in Great Britain, or in any other Protestant country in which

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[1] *La Révolution*, par E. Q.

Civil and Religious Liberty is secure. For in his work on the French Revolution he contrasts England and France, showing that politically they are at entirely different stages in their history. It has been the happiness of England to have made a Religious Revolution before making a political one, and in consequence there has been no radical contradiction between her religious and political principles, and when her liberties have once been achieved no fear that they would be lost, since they were founded on, and in harmony with, the religious belief of the people. The consciousness of this security has at last enabled Great Britain to admit to the enjoyment of this very liberty the remnants of that Church that always has denied, and ever must continue to deny, its principle.

But Edgar Quinet had no controversy with the Catholic Church in England or in the United States; he simply sought to bring about in Catholic countries that Religious Revolution we had the good fortune to make 300 years ago, but with that infinite difference in manner which exists between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The Religious Revolution he demands would be more radical than its predecessor in England, seeing that it would take place three centuries later, but then it would be consummated in a spirit of humanity, of justice, of equity, quite undreamt of in the age of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth.

The asterisks in the translation denote that a paragraph has been omitted. This has been mainly done in the interest of brevity: a comparison with the original will show that it has in no way impaired its thought and spirit.

THE RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

I.

A Radical Reformer.

SINCE the hour in which my good fortune led me to study the life of Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde,[1] and to enter into communion with that heroic spirit, I have striven to bring to light his works, well-nigh buried under three centuries of persecution, neglect, or ingratitude. * * * Thanks to the help that I have met with among the intelligent friends of human worth, my project is now to be realized.

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The men of our day will find in the French and Flemish works of Marnix all that can interest free minds. Even those who seek only mental pleasure will admire in these pages the robust diction of the

[1] Philippe de Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde, one of the founders of the Dutch Republic, second only in importance to William of Orange, of whom he was the devoted friend and counsellor, was born at Brussels in

sixteenth century united to the ardour and to the imagination of a painter or a poet. But it is not only a literary artist that I have sought to restore to the public; what I have chiefly worked for has been to accomplish the resurrection of an athlete of the truth, a destroyer of lies.

* * * Marnix has not merely wished to discuss the Church of Rome from a literary point of view:

1538. His father was of Savoyard extraction, his mother, Burgundian and Dutch. Marnix was educated at Geneva under the eye of Calvin and Theodore de Beza, the latter of whom he used to call his *father in God*. At the age of twenty-one he came back to his native city, and was at once engaged in the religious struggle of the time. Obliged to fly, he went to Italy, and when he appears again in his own country it is as a leader of its nobility determined to curb the religious tyranny. It was Marnix who prepared the famous *Compromise*, or Covenant of Nobles, the object of which was to root out the Inquisition from the Netherlands. A daring attempt that he and his brother made to rouse the country failed, Jean Marnix was killed, and Philippe had to fly for his life. He spent his retreat at Heidelberg in strengthening his fellow-exiles, and their little churches; an apostle of Protestantism, he goes about presiding in synods, collecting money for the cause of "the Beggars," and writing letters of consolation to its scattered members. He meets William of Orange, and wins him over to the religious revolution. Henceforth the Taciturn is his leader and his hero. Deputy of Guelderland in the Congress of Dort, Marnix persuades the Estates of Holland to give the command of their forces to William, and to promise to support him with their money and their lives. Become a sort of prime minister to the Prince of Orange, he experiences personally every phase in the struggle. He is taken prisoner and surprisingly saved—first, by a strange delay on the part of the Spaniards, who at this time were cutting their prisoners' throats; secondly, by the fortunate capture of the Spanish Admiral on whom William threatened reprisals if Marnix was put to death. A year in anxious captivity brought Sainte-Aldegonde almost to despair. He solaced himself by translating the Scriptures, and making a metrical version of the Psalms. Thus the Dutch Bible was born in a prison in Utrecht. Exchanged at last, he entered once again into his high position, and in 1576 Marnix was one of the signatories of the Pacification of Ghent. The Spaniards, unable to succeed by force, now tried diplomacy, but William and his counsellor were wary, and re-

with him the struggle is serious and to the uttermost. * * * You must not expect to find in his works the compromises of our day. There is no double-dealing in them, but a veracity that knows no mercy and gives no quarter. If you like being deluded, you should avoid them. For what Marnix promises he performs. No one can read him to the end and believe any longer in Catholic dogma.

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fused to allow Liberty to be destroyed in the name of Liberty, preferring rather to appear illogical, and to risk the alliance of the more Catholic provinces. In 1579, Marnix, in concert with William, prepared a simple constitution for the closer alliance of the Northern Provinces of the Netherlands, called the *Union of Utrecht:* the foundation politically of the Dutch Republic. We find him also engaged in missions to Queen Elizabeth, to the German Diet, to the Elector Palatine, and to the Court of France, the object of the latter being to induce the Duc d'Anjou to become King of the Low Countries. The duke was a Catholic and a Valois, but Marnix had prepared what he called "a muzzle for the prince," in the shape of a constitution founded on the modern idea of the right of the people to choose their rulers. The French, however, behaved so badly that they were soon expelled, and Marnix suffered in popularity. In 1584 he was appointed to defend Antwerp against the Duke of Parma. Unfortunately the assassination of the Prince of Orange just as the siege began deprived him of his main support, and after thirteen months, during which he made every effort, Antwerp had to yield, and with it fell the hope of a strong Protestant State in the Netherlands. Whereupon the Estates of Holland had the ingratitude to proscribe him. Marnix now showed himself truly great. He neither quitted the country in disgust, nor conspired against his detractors, but retiring to his home in Zeeland, strengthened his own soul in God, and sought to deepen the foundations of the Republic by educating his countrymen in what he conceived to be true religious principles. In course of time he so overcame calumny, that the Estates of Holland officially appointed him to make a translation of the Bible into the Dutch language. He removed to the University of Leyden, which he had founded, in order to carry out the work, but died December 15, 1598, just as he had completed the last verses of Genesis. It was in these last years that he wrote the work referred to in this chapter, and which he called *Tableau des différends des Religions.* To conceive its style one

It will become for him as the site of a church that has been demolished and abandoned to the whistling and laughter of the winds; a final form of paganism, exposed in all its nakedness; a mythology restored and suddenly overturned, the scattered remains of another Diana of the Ephesians; and above these ruins, the conscience of modern humanity, courageously seeking, examining, and tracing out for itself a return to God and Liberty through the Gospel.

What have these works of another age to say to us? What can they teach the men of our day? What thoughts, and the case occurring, what resolutions ought they to awaken in our minds? The dead do not return unless they have something to tell the living.

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must imagine the mockery of a Voltaire full of faith, the intense seriousness of a Pascal clothed in language as humorous as that of Rabelais. Warrior, Statesman, Theologian, Marnix was also the prophet and the poet of the Dutch Revolution. He animates, he scourges the flagging energies of the people; he arouses their ardour by the Wilhelmus-Lied, a patriotic poem, conceived in the style and spirit of a Hebrew psalm. Marnix is in fact the genius of Dutch Protestantism incarnate—Calvinistic in faith, but without a shade of its morose, atrabilious spirit, his humour is rich, genial, careless even to ribaldry. His life was like his thoughts, ever occupied with the highest aims; the freedom and gaiety of his manners would have scandalized the precisians of puritanism. He was three times married, his son Jacob was killed during the struggle; one of his daughters was married to a Barneveldt, the other two became the wives of leading men in the Republic. His death was celebrated by the Protestants of La Rochelle in lines that recall the hymn by which the memory of the great martyr for the Abolition of Slavery is perpetuated in the United States:—

"Ce grand Marnix est mort . . . . .
Ici gisent les os du grand Sainte-Aldegonde;
Son esprit est au ciel, son lot par tout le monde."

Authorities: *Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde;* par Edgar Quinet; *The Rise of the Dutch Republic,* by J. L. Motley.—*Note by Translator.*

In what circumstances do these works reappear? Two centuries and a half have passed since Marnix lived, and notwithstanding his shout of victory, not a single people in all that time has been really torn from the mediæval church. It has not been able to reconquer any part of what it then lost, but it has kept enchained all the nations that the sixteenth century left it. Two of these nations have perished—Poland and Ireland; two more—Spain and Italy—seek a liberty born of yesterday and already menaced; the rest are enslaved and not permitted even to say so.[1]

Marnix has demonstrated that Catholicism is a new paganism. That which the friend of William the Taciturn did with regard to its dogma, our age has done with regard to its politics, and for my part I claim the honour of never having ceased a single day for forty years to show the radical and absolute incompatibility of the Roman Catholic religion with modern civilization, with the enfranchisement of the nationalities, and with civil and political liberty. God be thanked, events have given to these ideas a confirmation sometimes beyond my desires. The eyes of the most blind have been opened by the sight of a great people, who, after sixty years of efforts and sacrifices, in which so many gigantic works have been undertaken, and so many magnanimous combats fought out, still remain on the old foundation of the middle ages, condemned in consequence never to be able to found

[1] 1857.

within itself, I do not say the perfect institutions, but even a single atom of durable liberty.

Two points are incontestable concerning this religion of the middle ages:—

Falsehood in spiritual things, tyranny in temporal things. Such is the state in which the question presents itself to-day. Many chances having combined to produce a degree of evidence sufficient to close the discussion, do we or do we not wish to come to any definitive conclusion, and to take a step forward?

II.

Does Liberty mean the Right to destroy Liberty?

THAT Catholicism must fall, the old world and the new are agreed; even Diplomacy takes care to inform us that it may unexpectedly be struck at the head—at any rate the institution already totters.[1] Warned on all sides, do we blindly wish to leave things to follow their course, without our taking any intelligent part in their direction? If there is really a likelihood of Catholicism being some day dismembered and without a head, shall this all happen without our having foreseen anything, or having anyone amongst us who has even reflected on the means of concluding

[1] This looks far less likely than it did in 1857. The loss of the temporal power has strengthened rather than weakened the moral influence of the papacy. Quinet believed, as we shall see farther on, that such a half-revolution would only be the precursor to its return to greater temporal power than ever.

and regulating the chaos? Do we not wish at least to be able to throw an idea into the abyss that will open as soon as those apprehensions are realized?

But here I must admit the advantage that the enemies of Liberty have over us. Whatever their country or belief, they all by an infallible instinct rally round the Roman Church as around their citadel. If the necessity of self-preservation allowed me, I could easily admire those rapid tactics, prompter far than reasoning, by which the partisans of oppression have in every land been made to see that she is their true bond, the real strength, the key of their position. They all recognize their Labarum in the Roman Church. Nor are they deceived. Instinct, the very force of things, renders Papal Rome the cement of every kind of bondage.

To what an extent, alas! has it been otherwise with the friends of Liberty. I should only pain myself were I to enumerate the false reasonings, the subtleties, the illusions, the sophisms by which they have been willing to deceive themselves on the nature of the danger, and to close their eyes to the progressive march of their mortal foe. What efforts, what catastrophes have been needed before they would even recognize that they had received a blow!

It was only, they said, a false alarm, quite causeless—a mere poetic or philosophic prejudice. Is the enemy any nearer?—why, then, fear him more than formerly? Pshaw! he is too contemptible to trouble about. Besides, he may be approaching as an ally, or even as a

friend. At least the lower clergy are a pure democracy. Would you mistrust those who naturally belong to you? After all, the Revolution will soon convert the Church. Only get the Church to bless Liberty in the germ, and the reconciliation will be complete.

Compare with this obstinate determination to be deceived, the instinctive clearness, the rapid vision with which the enemies of Liberty instantaneously ally themselves with the Church; and ask yourself who must be victorious if we do not at last begin to find out our real position in this calamitous state of things.

Every age, after having passed through a fundamental discussion, has proposed to itself an end. Will the nineteenth century alone draw no practical result from the protestations that rise from all parts of the earth against this tyranny? Is it to end only in an agitation by words? Do we wish only to speak, to write, to cavil, without leaving any trace in things? In the agreement between Catholicism and Liberty, such as our age has entered into, the balance is altogether unequal. It cannot remain without correction.

Wherever, being in authority, Catholicism meets with Liberty, it swears to destroy it, and as a matter of fact it does destroy it. In return, wherever, being in authority, Liberty meets with Catholicism, it swears to respect it. Overthrown Liberty raises Catholicism up again, conquered Liberty craves for it quarter. Can this arrangement last for ever? Does Liberty mean the right easily and with impunity to destroy Liberty? Thus the world is becoming the prey of a

new scholasticism from which we shall not even try to escape. We shall fall under the accident of two or three syllables, and they will have the magic power to deprive us of common sense. It will suffice for the enemy to get possession of the watchword, for us to believe ourselves obliged to let him through the gate. Because oppression has taught us to pronounce the password, *Liberty*, we conceive ourselves bound in conscience to deliver up the position we have been appointed to defend! We shall see the nineteenth century falling into a kind of dotage, and shall suppose that we have not even the right to give it a warning!

Honest Brutus! magnanimous dupe, eternal sport of the victory that mocks you because you dare not seize it! Are you going on for ever raising up your fallen enemy? For it is you who are always reopening the way for Antony. You wish Antony to mount the platform and make his speech, and should anyone better informed oppose it your voice it is that cries to the crowd: "Silence! listen to the noble Antony." You are still willing that he should carry out in public his servile rites, his dead ceremonies, for—say you—"Antony is our friend, Antony has grasped our hand, only let Brutus have his turn, and the people will be sure to give their votes and their goodwill to Brutus."

This is what you say, but I answer: "Take care! Antony will ruin you, you and yours, if you do not ruin Antony."

III.

How the Catholic Church destroyed Paganism.

THE first thing to do is to get rid of illusions. Whatever may be your intentions or your hopes, do not imagine that an old religion, however worn-out, disappears by the action of time alone, or even by any efforts of the human mind. This is a snare, a false idea that must be given up.

Look at the decrepit churches of the pagan East: Brahminism, Buddhism. No authority has ever commanded them to disappear. These religions, which have existed thousands of years, remain petrified like some inorganic mass, deaf and blind, over which discussion takes place without its even hearing it. It is just the same with this Brahminism of the West. You may suppose as many refutations as you like. What matter refutation, discussion, light, preaching to those who no longer have eyes to see or ears to hear?

Would you know how the old religions disappeared? The Catholic Church has herself given us a perfect example of the way these sorts of changes are effected, and I cannot understand how she can repel as execrable the very law that she has made herself, and upon which she rests.

Her historians have succeeded by degrees in making all admit that the Catholic faith overturned all previous

religions solely by the diffusion of its doctrine, by the power of persuasion, beauty, and moral goodness, without force or authority being needed. Upon this false scaffolding, Heaven knows what theories have been built as to the ease with which a worn-out religion disappears before the mere breath of reason and examination—before what we call education, development, progress of mind. This has been the fiction, now for the facts.

Long before being converted to Christianity, the emperors of the Lower Empire had recognized the profit that despotism could draw out of the Catholic Church. This is why Constantine, before he became a Christian or was baptized, was already a zealot for this new instrument of domination. He had discovered the Church by its political side. A shipwrecked mariner could not have thrown himself with more impetuosity upon a plank in mid ocean than these despots of the Decline and Fall seized hold of the unity of the Church, hoping thereby to save their Empire, breaking up in all directions. Between these two tyrannies—the Church and the Empire—the one just born, the other just dying, there was a sudden union as soon as they were put in contact. The Church, yet weak, espoused the Empire. The imperial soul of the Cæsars passed into Catholicism, and it grew old at once by many centuries; in a moment it passed from extreme bondage to absolute lordship. The worn-out Empire tried to become young again in the spirit of the Church. From this mixture of an old and a new

despotism was formed that monstrous unity with two heads called the Lower Empire.

As soon as the Catholic faith was armed and mistress, she proposed to herself to get rid of the old pagan religion. To effect this she did not limit herself to instruction and conversion, to preaching and catechizing, but made use of the opportunity as soon as the opportunity was afforded her. To render Paganism innocuous, she did not content herself with disdaining it, she resolved to finish it. With this end in view, she adopted a whole body of measures thoroughly welded, the basis of Catholic law, which, though it certainly cannot be accepted as an ideal rule, was, in the midst of a society delighting in force, completely successful in leaving no means of escape to the past, and in giving to the future the impulsion of a decree of fate.

IV.

The Nature of the Catholic Law against Paganism.

FEW words will be needed to show the circle in which the Catholic authority completely enclosed the ancient religion and rendered its disappearance an absolute certainty.

Three points had to be considered: the institution in itself, the persons, the things. And this is the way authority decided the matter, perfectly sure that

nothing would be omitted if these three points were resolved by the same principle. In that which related to the institution, the decision was laconic. It is entirely contained in some decrees of a few lines; it will be enough to cite the following, since the rest are like them:—

The Emperor Constantius:[1]

"Let superstition cease! Let the folly of the pagan worship be abolished! Whosoever shall have dared to contravene this law and celebrate sacrifices, shall suffer the penalties ordained in the law!"

Further:[2]

"We will that all renounce the exercise of the pagan religion. If anyone disobeys, let him be struck down by the avenging sword."

With regard to persons the principal regulations may be summed up thus:—

I. All approach to temples, in any place or any city, expressly interdicted.[3]

II. Penalty of death[4] against whosoever visited the temples, lit fires under an altar, burnt incense, poured out libations, adorned with flowers the hinge of the doors.

III. Civil death to all who relapsed into the old religion, their goods to devolve upon their nearest relatives.

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[1] See the whole of the sixteenth book of the Theodosian Code, Imp. Constantius.

[2] Constantius.

[3] Theodosius the Great, Arcadius, and Honorius.

[4] Constantius.

IV. Priests to be exiled outside the metropolis, and submitted to due coercion.

V. (When the penalties were mitigated, confiscation of goods and exile.)

VI. Governors of provinces, public officers rendered responsible for the execution of these laws under pain of capital punishment, and confiscation of goods.[1]

The regulations concerning things were as follows:—

I. The temples to be closed, destroyed, and razed to the ground.[2] For, adds the law, in extirpating the edifices the very material of the superstition is extirpated.

II. All representations of the gods, statues, and images, to be everywhere cast down, and every altar razed and rooted out.[3]

III. Pagan schools to be destroyed, and the buildings razed.

IV. The stipends of the priests to be applied to the support of the troops.[4]

V. Any religious edifices in the possession of the State allowed to remain, to be devoted to civil and public uses.[5]

VI. All private properties in which any of the exercises of the ancient religion shall be performed to devolve on the Treasury.[6]

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[1] Arcadius and Honorius. [2] Constantius prima lex—Arcadius.
[3] Arcadius and Honorius, Theodosius. [4] Idem.
[5] Idem. [6] Theodosius.

We see here the way in which the new Church made a place for itself on the earth.

Even supposing the old religions had had the strength to maintain themselves for ages to come, by force of custom, or of respect, or of that exterior that exists long after faith has gone, or even of a real belief; yet I do not see how they could possibly have escaped a system so perfectly arranged. How could the faith of the parents have transmitted itself to the children or grandchildren in a state of things from which no one could escape, and fly with his gods into the wilderness? Imagine for a moment that the founder of this law—the Catholic religion—had itself been submitted to it for only two generations, and I should like to know where it would have been after such a trial.

Look at the irresistible logic by which these measures are united one to the other: it is worth while examining them closely.

First of all the general principle is laid down—the annihilation of the ancient worship.

Volumus cunctos sacrificiis abstinere—We will that all should abstain from sacrifices.

Aboleatur insania—Let this folly be abolished. This is not a reform or a mere suspension of the worship; the mind is not allowed to remain a moment in doubt, the hope of re-establishing the conquered religion is torn up by its root.

Cesset superstitia!—Let superstition cease. What a multitude of half-believers in the dying paganism

would be carried away by this strong and haughty word. They would have gone on languishing, without faith or resolution, in a dogma kept up only by habit, but the sovereign word is proclaimed, "Let superstition cease!" and all yield. The opposition some dreaded has no existence. If, instead of acting, the new authority had tried indirect measures, had entered into consultations, the old religion would have imagined that it had a force which it did not possess.

Worn-out religions resemble those old trees that are nothing but bark. They go on vegetating and casting their dark shadows over the soil until the day comes that a flash of lightning or the axe of the woodcutter strikes them, and they fall a heap of dust.

After the general principle come the particular provisions which are equally well worth considering. The first relates to the temples. "Let all temples in every place and in every city be at once closed! And let everybody be forbidden to approach them!"[1] Directly this measure appears incomplete, not only the closing but the destruction of the buildings of the ancient religion is ordered. The new Catholic authority understood the power of external objects, and particularly of sacred places, on the minds of men. Consequently, those who command in the name of the Church allow no consideration whatsoever to stop them. Even the religion of Art, which still had influence with many, had no power to restrain

[1] Constantius.

them. Libanius[1] asks quarter for the stones at least. His prayers are useless. The most magnificent works of the hand of man, the most celebrated edifices in Greece, Italy, Africa, or Asia, are pulled down directly they are found in the way of the *ecclesiastical hand*. The hammer and the pickaxe resound throughout the Empire. The legions *are sent against the stones*. If the political authority is for a moment idle, the councils demand that the work of destruction should be completed. That of Carthage denounces the edifices, the statues, the very trees. Out of the ruins of the temples arise churches.

Remark especially the distinct intention of the decree assigning the revenues of the temples to the soldiers. By this means the armies were incited to the plunder of the old Church. So, too, they interested the people in the change by devoting to their use for games or circuses, such parts of the old buildings as chance might have spared. And often, in order utterly to pollute the temples, they were turned into places of prostitution.

Thus the interest, the cupidity, the passions of the masses were combined with the sovereign will of authority to despoil and ruin the pagan buildings. Decrees were hurried forth, ever increasing in number and never lessening in severity. At last the final blow was struck by Theodosius II.:—"Let all the temples,

[1] The Emperor Julian studied under Libanius, who wrote two orations in praise of his scholar.

sanctuaries, if they still remain entire, be destroyed by order of the magistrates, and purified by the Cross. If any one contravenes this law, let him be punished with death.[1] After this, paganism disappeared; it was in reality materially impossible to continue its worship. It could have neither priests, nor temples, nor sacrifices; and these changes having been effected, not as blind acts of violence, but in the name of the law, they immediately received that consecration which legal authority so readily imposes upon all that bears its seal. The greater part of men felt irresistibly impressed by the apparent legitimacy of the force displayed, and recognized the will of Heaven in the new measures. Then the sudden and unforeseen absence of the old faith leaving among them a void which needed to be filled by some other creed, and there being nothing to remind them of the old one but ruins and disasters, they began to detach themselves from it and it was quickly forgotten. Discovering around them a Church rich, triumphant, powerful; that, moreover, imitated the old ceremonies, they felt attracted towards it, and in the end submitted to the new belief. They had in reality been handed over to it in advance.

The truth of all this is patent, for wherever this system of law was applied, paganism vanished of itself; wherever, on the contrary, these laws could not extend, paganism remained—and remains yet—without alteration, as anyone may see in the great religions of Oriental

[1] Theodosius the Great.

Asia. What these religions were before Christianity, they remain to this day.

Thus, too, it is clear that, in its struggle with paganism, Catholic authority has itself given the world the most complete and radical method for annihilating an ancient religion; and the more closely I examine this method the more I find it so decided, logical, and consistent that, supposing the problem strictly defined, I doubt if the mind of man could discover a more certain solution.

V.

How a Religion comes to an End.

I HAVE described the nature of the Catholic Law to which Theodosius has given his name. I add that this law, which has served to establish the domination of the Church, has equally served to maintain it. Wherever the Church remains mistress, this law is found; on the other hand, wherever its adversaries have succeeded in conquering her, it has been with this same law. Wherever a province has been finally torn from the Roman Church, this legislation has been used for a moment against her. England, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, and a part of Germany, have only been able to assure their victory in turning with discernment the laws of the Church against the Church.

It is not my business here to show what in this legislation is contrary to the spirit of our time, nor

what are the portions that might still be revived. Neither am I called to decide whether by the law of retaliation—the eternal *lex talionis*—this Catholic Law, taking a form more in harmony with modern humanity, be not one day destined to surround in its turn the Catholic Church. To do this would be to wish to enter into the councils of the future. All that a writer can do is to gather together those materials by which one of those resolutions which change an age and are its crown are at times formed and ripened. But to say in advance, Do this, do that, would be an insensate thing, since in such questions all depends on the circumstances, the place, the moment, the degree of force, passion, and will, you happen to find among your contemporaries.

With the modern habit of reducing everything to a money value, the men of our day willingly believe that they can get rid of the domination of an ancient religion by simply depriving it of all pecuniary support. The new-born Church, or rather the ecclesiastical hand that held the pen of the Emperors, was animated by a far more profound policy, which, while it admitted this means to be of primary importance and indispensable, conceived it would be illusory if it were not accompanied by a whole body of measures such as I have already enumerated. And here I agree with the Church.

If she had been contented with merely depriving the pagan temples of State support, they would have been maintained by public pity; the more miserable they were, the greater would have been the compassion they

would have attracted, and this pity would have fed the hatred against their spoilers. For those who thus gave alms to the old religion would have considered themselves personally injured by the new. The people would have cried out at the robbery; and men's avarice would have ranged itself on the side of the old religion. Thus the persecution would have seemed at once odious and powerless, exciting as many complaints as extirpation, and without the advantages of a total ruin, would have incurred all its difficulties.

Instead of this, the old religion, until then tranquil and supreme, suddenly found itself, as it were, in one moment surprised, surrounded, struck down, ruined and utterly crushed out of existence, without even so much as room being left for pity. The feeling of the irreparable, the irrevocable, stopped complaint before it had time to form. At the spectacle of the instantaneous ruin of an old institution to which no resource was left, men, always such adorers of force, easily abandoned gods who appeared to abandon themselves.

Here the French Revolution affords an illustration of what has just been said, for it is useful to note how extremely timid its most violent decrees upon religious matters have been, compared with those of the Catholic Emperors—Constantine, Theodosius, Arcadius, Honorius, Valentinian, Theodosius the younger—who have caused the very soul of Imperial Rome to take possession of the church. These emperors dared to proclaim the fall of the old religion, and so to close the ancient era—an act the French Revolution had not

the courage to do; and I have no doubt that this want of mental audacity has had something to do with its defeat. For whilst the Revolution wore all the appearance of religious persecution, and so unchained against itself all that was of the past, it did not dare to strike the religious Past and legally put an end to it. By thus acting it left its enemies the hope of a revival, while at the same time it did all that it could to render them irreconcilable. No situation could be worse; it infallibly contained all those reactions and reverses which we have seen and yet see.

The times that have followed have shown that it was either necessary for the Revolution to have taken no notice of the old religion—a mode of proceeding which it seems to me would have been impossible—or if it had found itself obliged to make it an enemy, then it ought absolutely to have brought it to an end. By so doing it would not have had one enemy more. But to provoke Roman Catholicism, and to render it hopeless, and then not to strike it with legal interdiction; to deprive it of its priests, its altars, its laws, and its gold, and yet to leave it hope and rights by giving it standing-ground within the law and the Constitution, was infallibly to condemn the Revolution to perish, even after a hundred victories. Such a capitulation took all force from the boldest resolutions. It was as good as saying that the storm would soon pass over,—that it was only necessary to wait a little, and what the law had not dared to regard as dead would again show itself alive.

If, then, you would get any instruction out of the political establishment of the Church, capable of being of practical use in important circumstances (for men, whatever they may say, have in no wise changed), here is the lesson that to my mind the example referred to teaches.

He who, possessing authority, undertakes to root up a worn-out and harmful superstition, ought, before all things, to remove the superstition itself from the eyes of the people, and to render its practice absolutely and materially impossible, destroying at the same time every hope of its revival.[1] Then with the facility that men have of detaching themselves from that which they no longer see, the first thing they would do would be to forget that they had even known it. A new generation is formed which, having beheld nothing but the ruins of the dead religion, is thoroughly disposed to carry elsewhere its hope and its faith. Then, when the change is pretty well complete, it becomes possible without too much risk to slacken the rein, as was done by Theodosius the younger, who after a single generation was able without any want of ordinary prudence to mitigate the severe penalties imposed by his father.

In order to give his people another spirit, the first

[1] How remarkably this teaching is corroborated by the opinion and practice of all great Reformers. Not only the first Christian Emperors, but the Hebrew Reformers, notably Moses and Elijah, Josiah and Hezekiah, all acted on this principle. So did the mediæval missionaries, as, for instance, SS. Patrick, Gall, Boniface, and Olaf, as well as the great mediæval rulers, Pope Gregory the Great, Charlemagne, and Vladimir of Russia. To these we may add the Protestant Reformers throughout Europe.—*Translator.*

precaution of Moses was to remove them from among the idols of Egypt. As long as these idols dazzled the people's eyes it would have been of little use trying to tear them away from their worship; but as soon as they were lost to sight, Israel began to forget them, and the most abject of slaves became one of the leaders of the human race. It is needful that there should be a time during which the old religion is veiled, in order that the new may form and constitute itself. When this spirit has become strong, it is possible to restore the common right and reopen the door to the old dogma without running too great a peril, for by that time the new constructions will have had time to develop and grow strong.

But as far as experience yet goes, there has been no time nor place in which the Catholic Church has been allowed to remain with unfettered hands by the cradle of Liberty but what in a short time Liberty has been found stifled in its swaddling-clothes. This explains why the religious system founded by the Convention was powerless and could not lead to a solid creation. Had no political obstacle ruined that conception, it would have ruined itself. Liberty, equality of all religions, left an overwhelming force to the most ancient, and this force would have left no chance of life to the new order intended to be established. The frail little tree would have been crushed in its very birth, by that old Gothic root that the Revolution had not dared to extirpate by law.

Should the example of the United States be cited

in opposition to the principle laid down, I reply that on the contrary it confirms all that has been said. The Roman religion having, at the origin of the Constitution of that country, been held in a sort of dejection and dependence bordering on annihilation, Liberty has been able to establish itself and to spread so completely through the Northern States that by the time the Roman religion was admitted to common rights, stifling Liberty was out of the question.

VI.

The Religion of Force.

THIS is the place to examine the principal means by which men in our days imagine a tyrannical church can be restrained or even reduced entirely.

Before, however, entering on the question, I will state a fact that will throw some light on what will follow later on.

Europe, by its admiration for and compliance with unrestrained force, has clearly shown that she remains more barbarous than had been imagined. There is still something of the Vandal in her. And he who draws no practical consequence from this—who fancies himself born into an ideal society where right, truth, and justice have only to show themselves bare and disarmed to win the day—he would by his own fault ruin both himself and his cause in advance; he would

misappreciate things; and would find them very quickly avenging themselves on his theories. I could say more on this subject, but I refrain.

VII.

Can Education Destroy a Baneful Religion?

SOME who are most decided in wishing an end put to the Church of the middle ages, believe this object can be attained slowly and gradually, by the mere influence of education. Here, however, there is a vicious circle of which they take no account. How can mere education destroy a baneful religion? The thing has never been seen and never will be, and the principal reason is this:—

The real education of a people is its religion; beside it all other teaching is as nothing. Good or bad, vigorous or decrepit, it is religion that penetrates into the depths of the people, bringing them life or death. Do not tell me that the Roman religion is all surface and possesses only the outsides of men; for there are times in which surface is all that remains to the world. Then it is that he who possesses the exterior of a man possesses the entire man. In such times give me the mask, I will not ask you for anything more; with the mask alone I will make myself master of the individual man.

To imagine, then, that some lay houses, a few educa-

tional establishments, schools, colleges, and universities—places that, after all, only appeal to a very small number—can substitute themselves for the action of a sovereign Church and make it disappear at the sound of a few wise words and some excellent advice, is one of the greatest illusions in the world. What are all the systems laid down in books and scattered here and there by a few hands, in comparison with this authority able to surround a nation on every side? While this authority is standing, and has the power to mould the soul of a people, your philosophical treatises, your warnings, your lessons, your pamphlets, welcomed with applause by a few in the upper crust of the nation, remain ignored by the masses, who only know, see, hear, respect, and dread the Church with which day and night they come in contact, and which by a word can bring upon them dishonour and ruin.

It was this thought that destroyed for me all the joy of teaching in the days when I was permitted to live amidst a crowd of friends in the College of France—friends whose testimonies might easily have deluded me as to the reality of things. But I never quitted this living atmosphere without saying to myself,—Beyond these walls speech, life is not understood. I have only to cross this threshold and I shall enter again that opaque tenebrous mass from which not a single echo of my words will return. And results have proved that I was not mistaken.

Do not then expect that the ideas of your books, of your systems, are rooting themselves among the peoples

of whose minds the religion, the liturgy, the fêtes, and the terrors of the Church have possession. If some far-off echo of your teachings arrives among them, they are astonished rather than enlightened. They are divided between a Church which possesses menace, authority, force, and a few isolated ideas in entire contradiction to the native darkness in which they lie; they draw no practical result from this opposition; they are afraid, if not of hell, at least of the priest.

If such is the case in States where education is free, what shall I say of those where it is not—where there is no teaching possible but by the good pleasure of and in agreement with the common foe? How do you imagine that an education which does not exist, which is radically impossible, can, by the sole advantage of patience, get the better of an institution which is supreme and beyond the region of discussion? The illusion borders on the absurd.

Religious despotism, as every other despotism, cannot be rooted out unless there is a departure from legality, since its legality is just what it pleases. Blind, it rouses against itself blind force, and with the temperament that is formed in governments and religions of self-will, there is no need to be at all surprised if so many serf-peoples destroy to-morrow what they adore to-day.

VIII.

Can it be Destroyed by taking away its Temporal Power?

OTHERS persuade themselves that something irrevocable will be done when the Holy See has been deprived of the patrimony of St. Peter.[1]

Let us tell them what would be sure to happen in that case. There are two men in the pope—the prince and the pontiff; whenever the prince has been driven away the pontiff has always led him back again by the hand.

If the Reformers had been half-hearted, and had contented themselves with merely tearing the temporal power from the Papacy, their work would soon have come to an end. The spiritual would very quickly have got repossession of the temporal. The keys of St. Peter would in a short time have brought back the sword. It would, without doubt, be the same to-day. As a matter of fact, whosoever allows the spiritual domination and all the marks of its sovereignty to continue, has always been, in the end, obliged to

[1] It should be borne in mind that this was written in 1857, thirteen years before the event here treated actually took place. The temporal power fell September 20, 1870, and on the last day of that year Victor Emmanuel took formal possession of Rome. But the present condition of Italy strikingly corroborates the principle of this pamphlet—that no political revolution is secure which has not been preceded by a religious one.—*Translator.*

restore the temporal domain, as was seen in the case of Napoleon. No one believes in the duration of a change only effected in the political order. This is why few people will compromise themselves for a new system of things with so little confidence in itself that it actually maintains its enemy at the heart even of the State. An army of priests sustained by all who remain interested in the old domination, denounce impiety, spoliation, sacrilege, tyranny; and their complaints could not be more lively even if they referred to dogma. In whatever place the Papacy may withdraw itself, it will continue morally to reign over its ancient subjects; it will hold in its hands the thread of every intrigue, and every secret machination; and its spiritual power will only appear the more imposing because it will be itself the witness to the timidity of those who have not dared to go the length of attacking it. Theocracy, it is true, may leave its seat, but it still will have one foot there. An occasion will only be necessary to cause it to re-enter, and the tyrannies will be sure to unite together to bring such an occasion about.[1] Then the ancient theocratic power will bind anew the sword to the tiara, and after such a trial, it will appear more invincible than ever. It will show by unanswerable acts to the chiefs of the half-revolution, their partisans and agents, that in such matters it is absolutely necessary to know how to dare or

[1] May we not say that May 16, 1877, was the first step in such an attempt, frustrated by the firm belief of the French people that it was largely a clerical conspiracy?—*Translator.*

how to obey, and that he who does not know how to do either hastens to meet his punishment and his ruin.

IX.

Is it necessary to find a new Dogma before you come out of Bondage?

OTHERS imagine that nothing can be attempted against the old Church until the world has found a new dogma, and with this they set themselves to discover a new Church that shall replace the other in authority, infallibility, and universality. I might content myself with replying that it is not given to every people to create a religion. England, Holland, the United States of America, Sweden, have not, all of them together, produced a single dogmatic national Reformer, properly speaking, and yet they have not failed to become free. If these nations had waited until they had found a really new dogma, they would still be slaves of the middle ages.

I would gladly say no more, for the persons who adjourn all life, all effort, in the expectation of I know not what social Messiah, often have such excellent intentions that I should be sorry indeed to say anything to pain them. But, however, I am so convinced that they seek the impossible, and are quite in opposition to the modern spirit, that I cannot help contradicting them with a little more persistence.

There are two things to be considered in this idea: first, its practical value; secondly, its intrinsic truth.

Looked at practically it is evident that such a mode of proceeding must be disastrous, for if a new dogma has to be discovered before there is any escape from existing tyranny, what, I should like to know, will become of the world meanwhile? Is it not purely and simply yielding the field to oppression? And what if you should never find this grand X without which you profess to be helpless? Then the entire world would be the legitimate prey of the first tyrant who had wit enough to claim possession of the mystery which had escaped you. What a fortune for oppressive spirits! No, it is impossible to suppose that the fate of man has thus been left to violence and mere chance. Give up such a dream, then, and do not allow yourselves to be at the mercy of those who would make you a tool. Remember that we not only have duties towards the future, but that our first duty of all is to the present. Let us accomplish, and we shall have fulfilled all the rest. For it is not the future that is enslaved, it is the present; it is that which suffers and cries aloud; it is you, I, all of us—the men who live at this very hour upon the earth. To deliver the world we must work with what exists to-day in the world. Oppression is actual, it exercises itself upon real living beings, whose wounds are bleeding. It is, then, with real things, with the thought that exists at the present moment somewhere in the mind of humanity, with

living and present strength that you can and ought to combat living and present oppression.

Whilst tyranny has found its dogma, for you to say that you are looking for yours, is really accepting a truce with injustice, an armistice with evil, capitulating in fact to untruth. It is admitting in Right, in the Human Mind, in Moral Order, in the tradition of Truth, an interim, a suspension, a swoon as it were of Conscience. This has never been and never will be, since it would, if it were possible, be the very death of human nature.

No! no truce with injustice! I accept none! No armistice with Evil, with a crowned and triumphant lie! No suspension of arms against oppressive and homicidal force! If it can crush us, let it do it. We are in no trouble on that score. Better men will follow us. There is always truth enough in the world to fight authority set up by falsehood. You leave power to injustice, and take refuge in the unknown. Do you really expect to find any help there?

This idea is so disastrous practically, just because it is so essentially false. You do not find a dogma, nor prove it by laborious toil. You meet it on the road to Damascus, and are overpowered by a great light shining round about you.[1]

Moreover, it is going in direct opposition to the genius of modern times to suppose that any dogma could conquer universality in the same way as the old

[1] This sentence is the key to the author's use of the word *dogma*.—*Translator.*

church did. To enclose the expansion, the infinite energy of the modern soul in the letter of a new symbol is an enterprise totally repugnant to the times in which we live. Since modern humanity came into existence three centuries ago it has been impossible for any pope or religious council to impose their authority upon the individual conscience.

What in fact is the use of a council? A single man rising up to refuse its decision would prevent its becoming a dogma. It would remain a theory, a system, an opinion, perhaps a sect, but nothing like a general symbol.

This idea of making an universal dogma is nothing but an unhappy inheritance of the very church you want to fight. There is still something in you of the old Adam; you come out of the Catholic church merely to construct it upon another plan. But this plan, I tell you again, has been rejected, this mould has been broken. Why then talk about councils? They have been closed, and never will be opened again. Throw away this last link of your chain, this shadow of a bondage of which you want to be rid for ever.

X.

What are you Waiting for?

I REPROACH "Saint Simonianism"[1] with having completely deceived itself upon the most funda-

[1] English readers may fail to see the full force of this chapter unless

mental point, and with having by its imitation of the past, drawn many minds back again into the bondage of the middle age, blinding them to the living light of the modern world. The idea of again making a pope, a conclave, and a council is sufficient to prove how incapable this school was of really giving minds the right direction. To confusion it has added barren and false imitation, and has done everything to blind the French mind, and to rob it of the tradition of its own independence. What are you waiting for? A new religious and social unity. This you say is necessary to bring back life. *Quod unitatis cupimus plenâ redintegratione firmari*—the very cry of the monks of the Lower Empire.

Ah! if your wishes were granted, the modern man in you would very soon cry out. What has been the price of this much vaunted unity of doctrine in those secret and mysterious things which are the spiritual tribunal of the human conscience? A crushing tyranny of fifteen centuries. And this tyranny would be a hundred times more necessary, now that the individual soul has conquered its liberty, and has learnt to use it. You are hardly free from the old chain but you want to forge a new one! Your blind request will not be granted. At least on this point you will remain free.

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they are reminded of the fact that the social speculations of the Comte de Saint Simon exercised in Quinet's generation the most powerful influence over some of the leading minds of France. Auguste Comté, the founder of the Positive Philosophy and Religion, was at one time the disciple of Saint Simon.—*Translator.*

Do you still expect arms to drop from the skies? Those days are past; you must forge your own arms in the light of that free conscience which you received at birth. This age has taken from you many things, but it has not robbed you of this. You cannot, you say, save yourself except with forces, with ideas which as yet exist in the mind of no one, not even your own.

If a man stranded on some sandbank in an unfrequented sea were to make a raft from that which first came to hand, he might by what was saved of the wreck, embark anew, and be once again restored to his home and to his friends; but if instead of this he were to wait for a ship to come from heaven, rejecting all those that really existed and passed before him, refusing to be delivered by aught but some ideal vessel as yet unseen, and which perhaps did not exist and never would, what other fate could so infatuated a being expect but to die alone in the midst of the ocean?

XI.

Concerning Those who are Waiting a Final Solution.

TO conclude.—Nothing is more illusory than to wait, as you are doing, the final solution of the problem. No book, no catechism will ever supply it; ages will pass away while you vainly wait for the flowing out of the waters of that eternal river which hides it from you.

Do each day that which you have to do. It is the primary rule in the solution of the question. But to believe that the final answer will be given you all at once, falling like an aerolite from the clouds, and that until then you are absolved from living, feeling, struggling, loving, hating, or fighting after the manner of men,—this is an idea insensate enough to ruin a whole generation.

To wish to regulate social life as if it were a geometrical figure is to be the dupe of big words. A geometer, a man of learning, if he cannot discover the theorem he is in search of, is brought to a stand in the deduction of his ideas. Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire once told me that not being able to resolve a certain difficulty in osteology, he was so discouraged that he gave up the study of natural history for six years, and only took it up again by mere accident. Who does not feel that to treat social and political life in this way would be to kill it? For a man or a nation to renounce moral life because they meet with an obstacle is to run the risk of perishing. To withdraw themselves outside living humanity until the solution falls from the clouds is a course they cannot possibly follow with impunity. Every day brings its immediate duty which must be satisfied, its question which has to be answered. And the people or generation which should resign its influence with men under the pretext that a certain theorem of social geometry had yet to be discovered, that generation would certainly cover itself with ridicule, if not with infamy, since it would

be untrue to human nature, which admits of no respite, nor leave of absence in the practice of public and private duties.

The idea of regulating society by institutes of learned men, as if society was like an equation of Euler—this idea so utterly beyond nature, so outside all life, all politics, has troubled and spoilt the best balanced minds. Such persons in seeking a formula have forgotten how to live. One only meets with men who are constructing the equation, who are seeking the asymptotes of the social hyperbole, and who, meanwhile, are losing the most simple instincts, going even the length of placing themselves at the mercy of the enemy. Social life has been made a mathematical problem, so difficult and unattainable, that it is not surprising that many people give it up altogether and would rather die. The mere act of respiration could at this rate be made such a scientific bugbear, by the number of preparatory efforts exacted, and the numerous dynamical combinations shown to be necessary to keep men on their feet, that it would become infinitely more agreeable to give up breathing altogether.

No, life is by no means the unrealizable problem that such persons make it. Social progress is not a geometrical, a mathematical, or mechanical science; it is a life, not a formula. And like all life it is far simpler than you imagine. To do human work the first thing of all is, if we can, to become men.

Whilst the friends of liberty misled by such misdirected mathematics, interrogate all science except that

of man, whilst they seek their solution in every part of the universe except in themselves, the enemies of liberty act otherwise; they know that human affairs are argued out in the conscience in a much more simple fashion, and that to remain master of the position, the main point is, each day to make a step in advance. They never lose ground, for they understand how at certain moments victory is merely an affair of tact and opportunity. It is with the simplest, most uniform notions that they have easily got the better of those who only care to take counsel of the mechanism of the spheres.

Do not let us any longer confound things so essentially different as Science and Life, Mechanics and Civil Society. The Archimedes of liberty do not construct dead works, their machines are living ones, their arms are their own minds. They dwell in the centre of human nature. Whoever attacks them finds them always ready and prepared. When the time comes for action, they do not turn aside to study the social problem, they resolve it at each successive hour of life, always comprehending the position, always armed according to the occasion, the moment, the difficulty, or the opportunity.

XII.

A Sophism.—The Church may be Reconciled to Liberty.

LET us at least disentangle ourselves from the thraldom of mere phrases. If you are not free to speak, keep silence, but do not try at once to speak and to say nothing, you cannot do it without torturing common sense. The worst evil of bondage is that it gives birth to every kind of sophism.

For example, you propose something which, if carried out, would not leave one stone upon another of the church you execrate. And this proposal you call *Reconciliation of the Church and the Revolution.* You may be yourselves sincere, but your language certainly is not; and being obscure it conceals that slavery which every obscurity implies. Besides this ambiguity does not delude our enemies. It is a harmless trap, into which they have too much instinct, too much experience to fall. Those you draw into it are the simple and the credulous, who are not so much as waiting but who are positively trying, imploring to be caught in some snare. But who amongst us with his eyes open, needs to be told that in this honest talk about the Reconciliation of Catholicism and Democracy, black means white, and that by the restoration of the church you mean its overthrow? This old illusion, the accord between the church and liberty, as

impossible as between the circle and the square, has ruined us over and over again, and is for ever trying to come into existence; and you are actually the persons to revive this illusion. You blind those who are beginning to open their eyes while you strengthen those to whom darkness is life. All your efforts simply tend to consecrate their rule. If you are for the Church say so, but if you wish its overthrow do not talk about conciliation of Catholicism and Democracy. It is playing with your friends quite as much as your enemies.

Do not let us borrow each other's names, devices, or flags. Let us at least save the freedom of the human spirit. Let us get out of confusion. But how are we ever to get out of it, if we take pleasure in causing confusion to be born again and again of itself? O tortuous age! detesting the straight path, when shall I have done with your windings, your doublings, your circuitous ways? Directly I have surprised one of your subtleties, you go winding, crawling, coiling into another still more obscure. On you go, twisting your rings round and round, until it is impossible to make you even look at the simple light of the day. What subtleties have I already met! And are there yet more to come?

XIII.

Another Sophism. All Religions are the Same.

AFTER the sophism just disposed of, the next I meet, the most deeply rooted and most contrary to the foundation of Liberty, is this: that from the point of view of truth, and even of politics, all religions are of like value, so that you cannot establish any real difference between them. This principle, contrary to all philosophy, science, and history, each of which seeks to mark the different nature of things, has led to dire results for the Revolution as well as for Liberty. For, far from all religions being alike, nothing can be more certain than that there are amongst them degrees of truth, even peculiarities and shades, just as in all else throughout nature. There is one that proclaims itself the enemy of all the rest, that glorifies itself as being incompatible with modern liberty. This religion has institutions, organs, instruments of bondage which the others do not possess, such, for example, as the papacy and celibacy of the clergy, from the latter of which has been born a new form of caste thoroughly irreconcilable with the organization of our new society. There are other religions quite compatible with modern liberty, since they have given birth to it, and are the means of preserving it. There are finally those that border on philosophic liberty, religions whose originators have been philosophers.

If the French Revolution had clearly seen those degrees and differences, it might, by concentrating its strength, its animosity, its decrees against the religion which excluded modern civilization, have eliminated that religion; while by leaving the principle of liberty in full force, it would have opened up the new era. But by making war upon all religions indefinitely, it has not destroyed one; in reality the Revolution has been wanting in boldness, since the very religion it had the mission to put down, has come out of its hands more complete, more unconquered than before.

Had the French Revolution better appreciated the value of the religious world, it would have been able to support its lever on all that contains an element of moral liberty and by its help to overturn the edifice of all tyranny. Thus it would have had the strength to put an end to the worship which proscribed every other. It would have dared to reduce its enemy. But not having made any difference in the religious scale, it has unchained against itself the very principle of religion without finding support anywhere in its effort to remove in an irreversible manner the landmarks of the old world.[1]

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[1] See *La Révolution*, par Edgar Quinet, now published under the approval of the French Ministry of Public Instruction as suitable for Public and School Libraries. The author traces the imperfection of the French Revolution to its not having been *preceded* by a religious revolution, and shows that its horrors were the necessary result of the twelve centuries of Catholic and despotic education. The Terror was the natural fruit of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.—*Translator.*

XIV.

Two Ways are before Us: Which shall We take?

DO not again commit the same fault. Once more we have the opportunity of choosing between two ways. Only, if, after so many experiences, reverses, lessons learnt in persecution, we persist in repeating the faults of our predecessors, in all probability the safety, the liberty, the dignity of the human mind in Europe will for a long time to come, be compromised. If, on the one hand, you attack in common, Catholicism and all the religions of the earth, especially the Christian sects, without distinction, you will compel the entire world to coalesce against you, a condition of things which must very soon reduce you to impotence; but if, on the other, you make use of every element opposed to Catholicism, especially of those Christian sects that make war upon it, adding to their efforts the impulsion of the French Revolution, you will place Catholicism in the greatest possible danger, and may reasonably hope to put it in a position in which it can at least no longer do you any harm.

The first plan has been attempted and has led only to reverses; the second, and it is the one I propose, has not yet been tried; justice, science, history, policy, equity, are all in its favour. Now is the time to choose. A dispersed army has often been suddenly rallied by

a simple change in the order of battle. Instead of vaguely seeking enemies at all points of the compass, and never really attacking any of them, concentrate your sight, your force, your will, on the one point that is the focus from whence all the attacks directed against you come; and if you recognize with the same unanimity as your adversaries that this precise point is the one that upholds the whole framework of bondage, namely, the Romish Church; then it will no longer be a question with you of wasting words, antipathies, hatreds, menaces, but you will bring all your force against that one point, without even swerving, until you have achieved some practical result which you can leave as an inheritance to your children.

For these great results you must have allies, at least you must have one part of the world heartily with you. But to repel alike all religious beliefs, is first of all to be unjust, and in the second place to be your own enemies.

The reason why I turn to all the beliefs and religions that have struggled against Rome is, that they are all, whether they like it or no, in our ranks,—since at bottom their existence is just as irreconcilable as ours with the arbitrary authority of Rome. Since this pretension, at once old and new, intends to enslave the world (*urbi et orbi*) you ought to find points of support and allies throughout the universe. For this reason I should invoke not merely a theory, a philosophy, or particular system, I should appeal to every oppressed belief, every persecuted church, every temple that can show

its martyr. It is not only Rousseau, Voltaire, Kant who are with us against the eternal oppressor, but also Luther, Zwingle, Calvin, Marnix, Herder, Channing, and a whole legion of minds who in their day and with their own people fought the very enemy who now blocks up our road. All these great mental athletes will find a place in our ranks. And we may especially appeal to those who in the freest forms of Christianity are the tie that binds one to the other. I do not propose a system or a dogma, what I propose is an act, a living work, an alliance of all the free minds on earth in order to enfranchise it from the spirit that now possesses it and destroys all its fertility.

For what alliance is more possible than that which the force of things produces? Such an alliance can alone bring to an issue all these discussions in which the nineteenth century runs the risk of wearing itself out without honour, profit, or the realization of one of its ideas. What can be more logical than to bind into one all the revolutions that have taken place in the world during the last three centuries, and uniting them in the same struggle, to complete the victory over the religion of the Middle Ages? It is a misfortune for the French Revolution to have isolated itself from former revolutions. Let us repair this mistake. Let us place ourselves at the heart of the modern world. Notwithstanding many errors, I believe that it is not too late to crown the close of the age by some great and never to be forgotten change. This is why I should appeal to everything that had a spirit of life, of

free examination, to everything that for a day or an hour has signed a compact with liberty; to all who wish that words should leave a trace in things; to all who seek in discussion a practical issue; to all who really wish to emerge from mediævalism and to bring it to an end; to all who in any degree whatsoever have caused the modern spirit to enter into the Christian world. Natural heresies, modern religions, sects, unprejudiced faiths, schools of free thought, systems, philosophies, all that lives, all that breathes ought to enter into this grand and supreme effort against the death that casts its shadow over us.

What would be the force of the modern revolutions thus led to the point in which they all meet? A force simply incalculable, a force which in my opinion would be invincible. It would be the Cause of the sixteenth century and of the nineteenth, of the Reformation as of the Revolution. Who are those who will refuse to enter into this alliance to get rid once for all of the Middle Ages? Those for whom religion is only a political bridle, any form being equally good provided it will bring the world into bondage. But very few will make an avowal of this sort, and it would not fail to revenge itself upon them if they did. All have the same end, all have the same interests, for I suppose that there are still some moral interests on earth. If not, give us bread and circuses, let us forget that we have ever been men.

If the sixteenth century was able to tear half Europe from the chains of the papacy, is it too much to expect

of the nineteenth century that it should finish the work only partially done? Is this too much to demand of its resolution, its force, its maturity?

XV.

WHAT WILL SUCCEED CATHOLICISM?

* * * *

I DO not claim the succession to Catholicism for a formula, for a theory, or for any sect in particular. I claim it for all the ideas that have saved the smallest portion of human liberty; the heir to Catholicism is, in my opinion, the human mind, such as it has been able to develop itself in the modern world, with its beliefs, aspirations, philosophies, new instincts. Liberty for all, expansion of every energy of soul and spirit outside the despotic and servile church.

If you refuse these wide outlets which the force of things has itself opened to bring the modern world out of antiquity and the middle ages, we must rest content with philosophy. But, with what philosophy? * * * Are we to allow the ancient bondage to continue established while you find the philosophic formula that will be acknowledged by all minds, in all places? What blinds us is that we always represent the future to ourselves under the form of a unity, in which we admit only our own sect or our own formula. In the very act of rejecting the past, we labour to make it live again. As inheritor of the Catholic Church, we

other Catholics are for ever seeking some other universal church, or at least, some universal philosophy. In this we deceive ourselves.

If we only take care to establish liberty, the religious centralization from which we wish to escape will not exist again. On the contrary, the old church, a blind, inorganic, low form of unity, a tenebrous chaos, will tend more and more to break up, in order to give place to variety of life. As from the bosom of inorganic nature centres of organized life have gone forth, so in the same way from the blind depths of the motionless church will more and more go out individualities, personalities, who will each have their own intuition in religion or in philosophy.[1] The age is already no longer the disciple of a single book. It will become so less and less. If it is true that every man ought to become his own priest, it is not less true that he ought to become his own philosopher; a condition of things which will in no wise prevent the existence of sects, of general beliefs, of various schools of philosophy, with their masters and their disciples.

Open then the double-leaved gates to all that contains an element of liberty, a spark of life, or of human dignity, open them wide, for a whole world has to pass through. Do not say to men, 'I would prefer that you stayed in your tomb unless you accept my

[1] Edgar Quinet could not have foreseen the Old Catholic movement, which did not begin until twelve years after these words were written, but which strikingly verified them, since it was a movement mainly confined to a number of distinguished men of learning and piety in Germany and France.—*Translator.*

formula, my system, but say rather:—There are many ways besides mine, which of course I believe the best, but all will be good, provided you only come out of the abode of the dead.

— If you destroy this Church, where will you lead me? This is a question the world has a right to ask.

— To my system of philosophy, you reply.

— That will not do, that gate is too narrow, I distrust it. I want to pass by the breach that modern humanity has opened, for this outlet is tried and I like beaten paths. This is what the greater part of mankind would say.

The time of the domination of a book, of a system, is passed. We shall never again see another Mahomet or another Koran. We shall never again see a *contrat social* becoming the class-book of an entire nation. Open then every book of life, and leave to the world the satisfaction of choosing its own way of deliverance, instruct it, impel it, but put no constraint upon its right of selection. If it accepts your system, your symbol, your doctrine, allow it to believe that it has found it out for itself; even when it follows you, permit it to imagine that it precedes you. For it is a proud creature, mistrusting all that appears exclusive, narrow, or domineering. Remember that it has just come out of a prison of eighteen centuries, and that it takes alarm at the slightest thing. Everywhere it sees gaolers and chains.

XVI.

What would happen if Catholicism fell.

If the alliance that I propose to all minds, churches, and systems that have a common interest should come to pass, if by the justice of history the eternal law of Retribution willed that the Catholic law should be applied by Providence to the Catholic Church,—of course in a form according with modern humanity,—if the warnings of diplomacy should turn out correct, the Roman Church would fall.

At first there would be surprise, fear, and a great silence; then on the morrow, men astonished at the possibility of being able to exist without the organization that seemed to them indispensable, would rapidly pass to the contrary sentiment, and we should see the people, who are to-day most riveted to this church, wonder more than any how they were ever kept so long enchained.

The main-mast being cut down, the vessel of humanity, stranded at the present moment, would rise from its reef, and proudly floating, would deck itself in new colours. The soul of Christianity, wherein it has remained free, would flow forth in abundance to fill up the void left by the fall of the Institution of the Middle Age. At the same time the philosophic spirit going forth from the books and systems of a few

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teachers, would become a spirit of life and action, diffusing itself over the dry and scattered bones of the old religion. It would not solidify into a single symbol, petrified as soon as conceived, but would become a great human and divine soul passing over the face of the nations, and renewing them. For each would have their part in the succession to the dead religion, and whether in philosophies or in sects, all would make an effort to merit their place in this vast inheritance. All things would become elevated in a quite unexpected manner, inspired by the modern spirit so largely increased by its own victory. The dogma that would survive would be Liberty, which, to all except those within the limit of the tyrannical church, would assure the present to the most wise, and the future to the best.

Even where the pure spirit of Christianity and of philosophy could not root itself, you would at least see emerging from the dismembered Catholicism, new forms, local, national, spontaneous, independent, which in any case would never be able to do the work of tyranny, when once its head, the papacy, was irretrievably destroyed. There would still be struggles in the world, since that is the lot of humanity, but those struggles would no longer be sterile. The nineteenth century enchained, stupefied, drunk with materialism would not become an object of laughter to posterity; it would have done its task as others, and instead of dangling its golden chains, would be able to point with pride to its works. Religion would not

merely be a mask, or philosophy an abstraction and a chimera; the former would have contributed to restore moral life to man, the latter would have become action, emancipation. Industry would not be a new glebe for new serfs; it would be a great people's factory, which would produce not merely things, but men. Europe would not be merely an old world; it would be a world made young again, altogether superior to a world made anew.

XVII.

Can Trade and Manufactures save Europe?[1]

SUPPOSE on the contrary that the papacy continues at the head of all the tyrannies, religious, political, financial, industrial, and administrative, like one of those Indian idols whose thousand arms each hold a drawn sword,—and tell me if there is a word in any

[1] The satire of this chapter will only be fully appreciated when it is remembered that it was written in the palmy days of the Empire (1857), when society was to be saved by a fictitious prosperity induced by a process of industrial-forcing:—Great Exhibitions attended by all the crowned heads in Europe, and which caused millions of foreign money to flow into Paris; Haussmanizing that city at a cost of sixty millions sterling, chiefly to keep 200,000 workmen employed, the process being repeated in all the great towns of France; construction of railways, docks, quays, bridges; great engineering schemes like that of M. de Lesseps' canal at Suez; financing reduced to a science; and in private life, fashion and luxury encouraged in order to stimulate industry. For fuller details, see an article in Quarterly Review, July, 1867, called *New Paris.—Translator.*

language capable of expressing the unlimited progress of the servitude in which you would be bound.

Spiritual and moral energy growing less and less, while material force visibly increased in power every day; such a total want of equilibrium would necessarily bring about the overthrow and fall of human dignity. Man would disappear in the machine.

You rely, in fact, too much on matter as the sole means of your emancipation, of your restoration to honour, dignity, good faith, probity—to all, in fact, that you are every day losing. It is a complete illusion, you make an entire mistake in seeking salvation through the progress of mechanism, or the development of trade and manufactures. You hope and believe that this machinery will save you the trouble of acquiring an intrinsic worth in yourself. You fancy that they will communicate to you all the value they possess. Undeceive yourself, nothing in the world can exempt you from having yourself a soul, a personal dignity, a character, a conscience, an expression of your own. All the iron rails, all the boilers at high pressure cannot discharge you from the obligation of having yourself a well-tempered character, of possessing that internal energy, that moral power that can resist if needful the weight of the whole universe, and which really constitutes the human being. Neither metal nor wood, not even iron itself can impart to you its virtues, you absolutely must have your own, and they must be those that belong to human nature. No machine can exempt you from being a man.

It is, in fact, just the contrary, for the development of mechanical forces calls for a development at least in equal degree of the energies of the mind. But if mind goes to sleep, gives up, grows less, and wantonly disparages itself, it cannot fail to be crushed by the very forces that it puts in play; far from serving it, all things will turn against it. Mind is buried under that which it pleases to call its victory over matter.

And this is just what has been seen wherever the industrial powers have increased without the human mind making an effort to enlarge itself in the same ratio. Look at the old societies in their decline. All had reached the highest point of perfection possible to trade and manufactures at that period of the world. They possessed all that was necessary to the highest fortune, save the principal instrument of all! Manhood was gone! Enveloped in the shades of an old and defunct religion they raised pyramids to death. They traded, they dealt wholesale and retail, they wove, they produced, they consumed. But their increasing riches only served to develop more rapidly the general misery and servitude. The most wonderful machines, those of Archimedes himself, did not save Syracuse from becoming the sink of the world. The finest roads in the ancient world, the grandest aqueducts, the most magnificent tunnels, the best considered projects for canalling an isthmus, all belong to the most disgraceful period in the history of humanity,—the Imperial epoch. The most delicious hot-baths in the world were the Thermes of Caracalla.

When the fine Roman lines of communication were completed and the net spread over Europe, what was the result? That the mind that governed the world had thereby obtained the most perfect means of expressing itself, and that mind being the mere whim of a master, his orders, his caprices, his cruelties knew no limits, his hand could reach the human conscience at the end of the earth. Henceforth there was not a single refuge for a single free soul. No one could escape unless he chose to stab himself.

It is really absurd to see you imagining that railways will restore you to dignity, security, liberty, while you yourselves go for nothing in the effort. Believe me, servitude will outrun you on the iron way, it will soon overtake you, if you have not better means of escaping from it. Your railways will only hurry forward such ideas as you permit them to carry; if they are slavish thoughts, then rails, steam, the electric fluid, mines, all the assembled powers of nature, will carry your slavery to every part of the globe. * * * The old nature of things has not changed. Nothing will take from mind its pre-eminence. Even soiled, even stained with blood it will still continue to rule the world; and if it is not a just soul that holds the helm, it will be a wicked one. A Caligula at the centre of a net-work of railways, see to where this leads!

* * * *

How ingenious is the spirit of inertia! What fine pretexts it always finds for sending the world to sleep!

Who would have thought that the doctrine of progress, for which we also have laboured, would so rapidly have become an instrument to prevent all progress? For the men of our time infer only one thing from this noble doctrine, to wit, that whatever they do, sleeping, waking, drinking, eating, crawling, they are helping progress. Having got hold of this notion of progress, they turn it, some to the profit of their apathy, others to that of their cupidity. The better sort are satisfied with taking it easy; they feel, they say, that the idea is making progress! it would be well not to push it on too fast. The others, once beggars, become millionaires by swindling in the stocks, all of course for the good old humanitarian cause. These cheats give themselves out for apostles.

As for the people, they glorify themselves with having, as it were, in their sleep made five or six revolutions; without even dreaming of it they have at one stride leapt over several centuries! Let such nations fall again into their pleasant slumbers! It will be always time enough to wake them them up when they are in Eden.

XVIII.

What would happen if Catholicism were victorious.

LET us see what would be the result of the victory of Catholicism. The progress of enlightenment absolutely stopped, the nations who have taken in hand

the great business of our time,—the Revolution of the Nineteenth Century,—would leave it to miscarry. And this failure of the thought of an epoch would be a lie given to the whole human race, the consequences of which would make themselves felt everywhere. These nations would find themselves among the first condemned to an eternal blindness, their eyes would be closed without its being possible for them to know what kept them in darkness. Hopeless of escaping the condemnation that had fallen upon them, they would sit down in the night; persuaded that all efforts were useless they would refuse their confidence to anyone, for they would have lost all confidence in themselves; they would esteem no one, for they would have lost their own esteem. Then they would accuse those who undertook to defend them, of being the cause of the inexplicable oppression and utter abjectness into which they had fallen; they would resolve never again to follow any leaders, nor to listen to any word whatsoever, but only to take counsel of darkness and despair. They would imagine that they saw everywhere feebleness, incapacity, or treason. Having reached this point they would become hard as a stone; they would have no pity for those who suffered for them; saying to themselves, that martyrs are only played out men of ambition. As to themselves, they would affect the apathy of the slave. To all moral decay, to every fall in civilization, or of human liberty, they would shake the head with indifference. By all these appearances and many others, they would seem the accomplices of their own

servitude; more than one would accuse them of having,—Judas-like,—sold the human race for a few pieces of silver. But, on the other hand, as they would still have a glimpse of a light, the memory of which they could not entirely forget, they would never become good slaves. Every now and then an immense sigh would be heard arising out of the depths of the earth; this sigh would be that of a conquered Enceladus, beaten down, blinded, enchained, who remembers that he too has known the light, and would be only too glad to reduce you to his own darkness and misery.

Another consequence would be, the rapid corruption of all free institutions. At the sight of the people beaten down by Catholicism and the easy triumph of despotism, a great desire of imitation would seize the dissident churches; they would wish to share in the victory, and as all revolutions are linked together, they would begin to deplore the too complete success of the Reformation, and would declare that if it had to be done over again they would themselves be opposed to it.[1] At least they would attempt to draw as near as possible to victorious Catholicism. You would see schismatic

[1] Comparing the position of Catholicism in Europe just before the battle of Sedan with what it was just before the battle of Waterloo, it must be admitted that its progress during the first half of this century has been great enough to warrant its friends in believing in its approaching victory. All revolutions being linked together, every historical student will recognize the great Anglo-Catholic revival to have been part of this advancing wave of Catholicism. Its characteristic features are here sketched with Quinet's usual insight. But while their truth with regard to the Church of England is patent, it may escape notice that it is also largely true of other dissident churches. The soil, however, being more uncongenial, the effect is disintegrating and bizarre.

churches ardently disavowing themselves, rapidly borrowing the tactics, the spirit, the antipathies, the hatreds, and at last the arms of their most ancient enemies. Nothing would remain in Europe but political religions; all would have caught the temperament of the conqueror. Its tyrannical spirit would spread like water through the churches founded on the right of private judgment, for each would be conscious that the model of successful despotism was Rome. Each church, temple, communion, sect, would make it a point of honour to come nearer to that model, and to deal the last blow at human reason, fallen and prostrate, so great is the desire among men always to be on the side of the strongest. The nineteenth century's denial would thus tend to corrupt the liberties of the sixteenth at their very source.

It would be just the same in the political order. All the modern institutions of liberty, the suffrage, elections, all would be turned against liberty. There would no longer be any platforms, nor assemblies, that did not make it a point of honour to show that they were just as able as any other institutions to be good instruments of oppression.

The more you penetrated among the masses, the more and more servile you would discover them to be, you would see the people voting with a laugh for their own slavery. The expiring nationalities, dragging themselves to the feet of the strongest, would deny the only thing that can make them live again:—Right. Moral pauperism would bring physical pauperism, and

physical pauperism would increase moral pauperism. All that remained of a nation would be some anonymous financing companies, which in silence would devour anonymous generations. Everyone would reproach his neighbours with being unworthy of liberty, and each would thus become a voucher for the debasement of all the rest. The level of intelligence falling still more quickly if it were possible than that of conscience, philosophy would be contemned because no one would understand it. One thing would survive in all:—Vanity. For the most humble would be given out as the model for the rest, the most servile would be set to teach those who were not so already; it would become necessary to endure without a word, that most intolerable of all things—the fatuity of a slave.

The times would then return in which writers, thinkers, friends of truth driven from their country would wander about the world, expelled from city after city, until the very earth itself would fail from their feet. They would continue to think, but no one would comprehend them. They would call, but no one would answer. Their thought would die without an echo, and would be buried without them. If ever found again it would appear obsolete. Generations and peoples would pass over the tombs without recognizing them.

Entire Christendom infected by the temperament of the Roman Church, would wither and be blighted. Henceforth there would be in the world two or three

great religions dead and petrified: Brahminism and Buddhism in the east, Catholicism in the west, casting, like the pyramids of Egypt, their massive shadow over a moral desert. They would be the sepulchres of the nations, and silence would extend over greater part of the earth.

XIX.

Conclusion—What ought to be done.

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WHAT then ought to be done?

I have told you.[1] I repeat it since you have not heard me. Come out of the old church, you, your wives, your children. Come out, while there is yet time, before she has herself walled up the gate.

Come out by every open way, in order that you may not perish of pauperism, moral or physical. Come out! and if by events at present unknown, Providence once more offers you its hand, know this time how to lay hold of it. Do not any longer give the world the spectacle of men who, without being able to accustom themselves to defeat, will not make any use of victory.

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[1] See my "*Letter. on the religious and moral situation of Europe.*" Dec. 1856.—This reference on the part of the author indicates that he considered his readers were already acquainted with his views and had only to be reminded of them in a few brief sentences; as, however, this cannot possibly be the case with most of the readers of this English edition, the translator has thought it desirable to introduce here so much of the letter referred to as will fully explain what Edgar Quinet thought was the duty of his countrymen.—*Translator.*

* * * *

Man[1] will not make up his mind to travel through life without a word that binds him to the society of immortal beings; he does not wish to enter into the world or to go out of it in secret, like a leaf of the woods that is born, that dies, without anyone knowing it. He wants a witness who will answer for him before the society of the living and the dead. Whether this is his strength, grandeur, or weakness, such is his nature. We shall not change him. Even if we could make of him a stoical philosopher, woman would remain; the wife, the mother, who would certainly never consent to be deprived of every visible link with moral society; and women will here give the law to men; and that law will infallibly be a return to the past if they are not kept back by a new tie.

Is not this what we see every hour of the day? No one is astonished at it. For my part, however, I cannot accustom myself to see a friend of liberty give his child in baptism to the very church that he is for ever proclaiming the enemy of all liberty. Among us Democracy is so made that every child in coming into the world receives the seal of the enemy of Democracy. The period of adolescence arrives, and the youth is confirmed by the same hostile power. In communion, he promises to remain faithful to this same adversary, who, on its side, promises him an implacable enmity. After this, marriage, then death; and this friend of

[1] The following is taken from the letter referred to.

liberty, from his birth until his last hour, is, in all the most solemn circumstances of life, the witness, the pledge, the disciple, the client, the prey, and the sport of the inimical church.

* * * *

When men have thus by necessity or weakness given those who belong to them to the foe, you know their answer: "What then! is it a matter of any importance? baptism, communion! pure forms that bind you to nothing! The religious oath taken in birth, in marriage, in death, before Heaven, before men, is only a word, a compliance, a formality, for aught we know, a comedy. Don't speak any more of it, please!"

Pardon me, it is necessary to speak and to say that liberty, democracy, will themselves be mere words as long as you serve them only with your lips and deny them in deed, as long as you give them up upon every solemn occasion in life or death. For it ought to be known for whom you are and with whom you are. If you wish absolutism, intellectual and civil despotism; if you believe that the servitude of the intellect is a good, give your children to the church which maintains this doctrine and makes a dogma of it. But if, on the contrary, you are in favour of liberty, of the development of the reason, it is simply monstrous to give your children to a church that curses what you believe. When I consider that of your free will you abandon to the church that condemns and curses you these new-born intelligences, unable to defend themselves, what word can I use? What I am about to say

may be hard, but it is necessary: whether you know it or not, you are committing a kind of moral infanticide.

And the excuse that you give, is worse even than the thing itself! "It is a play, a comedy." You know perfectly well that it is nothing of the sort; that it is no vain thing to be bound from the cradle by the engagements of a church, and to be confirmed in them knowingly as soon as reason begins. * * * Take care that the whole of human life, and all you profess to love, does not become in its turn a real comedy, the most miserable of all comedies. For the child who has begun this play in the cradle will, I fancy, have some difficulty in not keeping on and wearing in your presence with regard to human affairs the mask you have thus early taught him to wear in spiritual ones. Ah! it seems to me a most perilous thing to stamp a man's birth with an artifice, to make his first step a false oath! After having lied to heaven, the temptation will be great indeed to lie to earth!

What would I then ask you to do?

One thing only, and I will put it in the most exact terms, that you may have no reason to refuse me. I will not speak to you of your dead, nor ask you why you give them to the church against which you have declared war. * * * But the children, those who have just come into being, for them I ask grace. Here, you have not the excuse of tears, of lamentations, of the terror of the tomb. It is a joyful day that shines upon you, inviting you to the future!

Why on that radiant morning do you prematurely draw the shadows of night over that creature just arrived in the world and aspiring towards the light? I cannot comprehend you. * * * How can you bring your smiling infant to a source you call poisoned? How can you baptize it in a servitude you refuse for yourself? How can you enchain the free hands of this being, utterly unable to resist? Are you not bound as its father to preserve it, to save it from what you recognize to be the bad, the false, the dead? And it is you who bring it to this! It is you who bury it, scarcely born, in moral slavery! It is you who place on this little head, still weak and tottering, the iron yoke of eighteen centuries!

I know not what you will think of the freedom of my words, but I cannot restrain them, and as long as there is a breath in my body, I will arouse, I will embarrass, I will torment your conscience until you recognize what is so clear. For, in short, nature, life, the future, give you in each child born, the occasion, and so to speak, the injunction to come out of the past; and yet you make nature, the future, and this perpetually renewed life, all serve to renovate, to perpetuate, your covenant with bondage. It is necessary to open your eyes. Liberty, democracy, ought to profit from these inexhaustible forces of ever-reviving nature, or, if you are determined to turn against yourself these unconquerable forces, then a long farewell to democracy as well as liberty. For the laws of the universe will never change to please you; and when new gene-

rations are given you to renew human life, if you bind them, knowingly and wilfully, to that which there is most immovable, most hostile in the past, you disobey all the laws of life and only give birth to death.

What ought then to be done?

A very simple thing, but one, I fear, that may be rejected because of its very simplicity. The practical point, the useful point, the urgent point is to come in a body out of the church that has sworn to ruin you. The people who still dwell in the middle ages ought, in short, to step into the modern world; and in order to do this, I cannot expect that they should suddenly become philosophers.

* * * *

In such circumstances, if we do not wish that our times should pass useless and increase the weight of bondage, it seems to me that it would be wise and sensible to begin to enfranchise men *en masse* with the levers we now possess. For if men in the sixteenth century, in order to free themselves from the middle age, leant so much on the pure gospel, perhaps it would not be reasonable to rest to-day on the most advanced results of our religious revolution to free ourselves from Catholicism in its decay, the blindest form that has yet appeared in the world.

Let those who feel that they possess minds sufficiently tempered to live philosophy do so: I will applaud their resolution, for philosophy remains, after all, the most excellent of temples; *templa serena*. He who is baptized afar from all storms in the eternal

wisdom, will have no reason to envy others. But the number of such will never be great. It would be somewhat hard, then, and betray little sense, to count the vast majority as nothing. This admitted, it would, without doubt, be a great misfortune if among the many forms of modern Christianity which appear to run up and down the whole scale of religious liberty, from the least unto the greatest and to the most like philosophic liberty, there were none that the new men could appropriate according to their various cravings after independence or subjection.

I should not blame, then, the man who amongst so many different worships, all free from mediævalism, should chose for his child the religion which corresponded best with his own moral state.

* * * *

I can hear as it were beforehand the answer that will be made: "All priests are alike, better keep the old ones than take new. A Savoyard Vicar, an Unitarian, a Jesuit, they are all alike in our eyes. Let us remain as we are. Let us do as we have hitherto done. The unforeseen will tell us what to do."

I have said many times, and I repeat it again: the difficulties of a revolution made by philosophies begin as soon as the more egotistical deny it and give it up. Then the more honest, confounding philosophy and politics, craving from the very beginning for the absolute, the ideal, and not being able to realize it at once, become disgusted with all that is not perfection. Such persons from the first set up as their standard—

All or nothing. A sure way of being taken at one's word by Fortune, who usually refuses to the disdainful what she would allow to be torn from her in a moment of compliance or surprise.

* * * *

After all, the question at least remains very simple. If you do not wish that any of your people should be profited by the religious revolutions already accomplished on the earth, is it therefore necessary that your bold spirit should only serve to enchain you to the past? You do not wish to come out of the old church by any of the doors which the modern spirit has opened to the nations. Very well. In this case, make an exit for yourself. In the torn tunic of the Christ which the nations have parted among themselves, there is not a rag that you wish to retain. Very well. In that case don yourselves the virile robe. All communions, even those that border on philosophy, are for you only another kind of death. Very well! but in that case at least come out of your sepulchre.

* * * *

For myself, far from being attached to this one exit by philosophy, the most difficult of all, and which during long ages has been fitted only for the few, I would that the nations should come out in crowds from the old church by the thousand doors which the modern religious spirit has opened up in the walls of Christendom. The way is open; it is simple, it is wide, it is multiple enough to suit itself to the liberty of every one. Choose as you will! What do you fear? The

obstacles are conquered, the way is sure, it has been proved by crowds of men and many nations before you. There is no need to wait for a prophet, a revealer. The modern ages have broken open the door, and made wide the breach. It is only now a question of following in the footsteps of those who have been emancipated before you. Of what are you afraid? You have remained here the last of all. What delays you? What are you waiting for? Onward, then, advance, and come out!

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